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LD1910130988 [Editorial Report]

Israel

Clashes—A 5-year-old boy and a teenager were killed in a clash with IDF soldiers in the Nabulus casbah 18 October, Jerusalem television reported.

Two other Arabs and a U.S. press photographer were wounded in the incident.

The IDF is investigating the circumstances of the U.S. photographer's presence in the casbah, which is a closed military zone, the television added.

Inside the Green Line, seven Arabs were arrested after a Jewish schoolgirl was injured by stonethrowing Arabs in Lod, Jerusalem radio reported.

Three Arab residents of Ramla have been charged with belonging to the PLO's Force 17, the radio noted.

Internal Politics—The Supreme Court rejected the Kakh Movement's appeal against the disqualification of its Knesset list, Jerusalem radio reported, noting that this means Kakh cannot participate in the election.

The five justices ruled that Kakh is a "racist" movement which calls for a violent denial of rights and "systematic degradation" of sections of the population.

The court also upheld the Central Elections Committee's decision to allow the Progressive List for Peace to run in the election, the radio said.

As for the Alignment's plan to hold elections in the territories, the radio cited Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's remark that this is an "election gimmick" which no one will remember 2 weeks after the poll.

Foreign Relations—At the end of a visit to East Berlin, the president of the World Jewish Congress disclosed that the GDR has agreed to pay reparations to Jews affected by Nazi atrocities and said GDR leaders have indicated that an improvement in GDR-Israeli relations should be expected, according to Jerusalem radio.

The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem is awaiting an official GDR announcement in this regard, the radio noted.

As for relations with Hungary, HA'ARETZ reported that a Hungarian official informed Industry and Trade Minister Ari'el Sharon of Hungary's intention to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel in the near future.

Regarding the PRC, Israeli sources cited by Jerusalem radio expressed "satisfaction" over reports that all Israeli-Chinese joint economic projects will continue.

Lebanon

Twenty-one deputies who attended the Chamber of Deputies session declared that Speaker Husayn al-Husayni and other Chamber officials should continue in their positions pending the holding of elections for their jobs and for the Presidency.

In their statement, which was broadcast by Beirut radio, the deputies confirmed that the 18 October session failed to elect a speaker because of the lack of a quorum and underscored the need to support Lebanon's unity and reject partition.

The radio also cited a statement by Al-Husayni stressing he will continue to try to unite the legislature and enable it to elect a new president as soon as possible.

The Lebanese Forces (LF) Command Council subsequently issued a statement which implicitly denied Al-Husayni's right to continue as speaker by asserting that the Chamber's authority will only be valid if it is chaired by its oldest member.

The LF statement, reported by the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon, claimed that the choice of Al-Najmah Square as the venue for the Chamber's meeting was a deliberate attempt to block the election of a speaker.

Meanwhile, LF commander Samir Ja'ja' criticized Amin al-Jumayyil in a recent interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, contending that coordination was "difficult" with the former president and that there was "terrible corruption" under his administration.

Jordan

Turkey will supply Jordan with F-16 aircraft and other military equipment produced by Turkish factories, the UAE's AL-ITTIHAD reported.

The paper said the general format of the deal was agreed during King Husayn's visit to Turkey earlier this year and will be signed at the end of the Jordanian Army commander's current visit to Turkey.

Iraq

Prisoner Exchange—The Iraqi Government informed the International Committee of the Red Cross that it is ready to begin exchanging prisoners if Iran is in agreement, adding the prisoner exchange is not linked to implementation of the other clauses of UN Resolution 598, Radio Monte Carlo reported.

Chemical Attack—The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan announced that more than 47 Iraqi Kurds were killed in chemical attacks near Kirkuk in the last 10 days, IRNA reported.

Rebel Visits Syria—Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad received Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, Damascus radio reported.

After the meeting, Al-Hakim made a statement calling for cooperation among Iraqi opposition parties and denouncing Iraq's support for the 'Awn government in Lebanon.

Iran

Deterrent—Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani announced in an interview carried by Tehran radio that Iran has acquired a new "device" that it hopes will deter a resumption of the war of cities.

Amnesty—Intelligence Minister Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshahri stated that members of outlawed "grouplets" will be pardoned if political leaders endorse amnesty measures proposed by his ministry, IRNA reported.

Afghanistan

Arrests—A number of people were arrested for "sabotage," "spreading fear," and actions aimed against national security, Kabul radio reported.

Provinces—The Nationalities and Tribes Commission of the Wolasi Jerga approved the mergers of Kapisa and Parvan, Paktika and Paktia, and Konarha and Nangarhar Provinces, Kabul radio announced.

Islamic Affairs

Information Ministers Issue Communique

LD1410133988 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1800 GMT 12 Oct 88

["Text" of final communique of the first conference of Islamic information ministers; issued 12 October]

[Excerpts] 1. In implementating the resolution of the fifth Islamic summit conference, held in Kuwait in January 1987, and at the kind invitation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the first conference of the Islamic information ministers was held in Jeddah 11-12 October 1988, with the participation of the following member-states:

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; the United Arab Emirates; Indonesia; Uganda; the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; Bahrain; Brunei; Burkina Faso, the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Benin; Turkey; Chad; Tunisia; Gabon; Gambia; Algeria; Comoros; Djibuti; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Sudan; Syria; Sierra Leone; Somalia; Iraq; Oman; Guinea; Guinea Bissau; Palestine; Qatar; Cameroon; Kuwait; Lebanon; the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah; Mali; Malaysia; Egypt; Morocco; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; YAR; PDRY.

2. The conference was also attended by the organizations which belong to the Islamic Conference Organization, as follows:

The Islamic Research Center for History, Culture, and the Arts in Istanbul; the Statistic, Social, and Training Center of the Islamic States in Ankara.

3. The organizations stemming from the ICO also atended as follows:

The ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, IINA; the Organization of the Islamic States Broadcasting, ISBO; the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, ISESCO.

4. It was also attended by the following Islamic bodies:

The Turkish Cypriot faction; the Moro National Liberation Front; the Islamic World League; the United Nations Organization; UNESCO; the Organization of African Unity; the Arab League.

From the premise of the principles and objectives of the ICO Charter and the call in the Mecca declaration issued by the third Islamic Summit Conference and in the ICO resolutions for the affirmation of the principle of solidarity among all Muslims in the world, seeking guidance in the tolerant teaching of the true Islamic religion and emulating its noble values;

And taking into consideration the challenges and the conspiracies facing the Islamic nation, which are aimed against Islam and the Muslims, foremost the continuing Zionist aggression against holy Jerusalem and the occupied Palestinian Arab territories;

And from the belief in the importance of information and the consolidation of ties among Muslims in their solidarity in various fields and in the importance of information in the march of the Islamic civilization, which dictate the reconsideration of information plans in a way achieving the desired objectives of the Islamic nation and its legitimate aspirations;

And in the realization of the growing gap between the condition of the information and contact media in the Islamic world and those in the states which have gone a long way in the advanced technical fields, the conference studied a total sum of issues with the aim of clarifying the march in the information field so it may perform in this critical stage in the life of our nation the mission entrusted to it, that of supporting Islamic solidarity and enlightening Muslims about their religion and their role in the development march and in preserving their religious and cultural foundations vis-a-vis the subversive ideological invasion targeted at these foundations and tendentious campaigns, aimed at belittling and casting doubt on the originality of these foundations.

The work of the conference began with a Koranic recital. This was followed by a speech delivered by King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, who patronized the opening session of this Islamic gathering.

In this important speech, he outlined the responsibility of the Islamic media in the defense of our belief and our nation's interests and in resisting the attempts of misrepresentation aimed at our nation.

In this connection, he stressed that the Islamic faith by nature is far from violent, because violence is repulsive, and our closeness to the outside world requires us to arm the Islamic youth with the weapon of faith in the clearer manifestation of tolerance, sympathy, and affection, distinguishing it from other faiths.

These are the real meanings which the media should clarify and emphasize when interpreting the Islamic faith. In this way, people will realize the faith's good points and noble objectives because our faith calls for counsel—offered and sought—tolerance, and the realization of the interests of Muslims, helping them attain the highest levels of development and progress free from the evils of sedition, which are infiltrating our homelands to harm our solidarity. [passage omitted]

In his speech, the custodian of the two holy mosques called on the participants to make the Islamic media avoid the formats which are alien to our culture and thought to avoid giving incorrect adjectives to those

concerned about the purification of the faith from the heretical doctrines and fancies which have no relation whatsoever to our true religion and which have been attached to the faith in past eras.

In this connection, he referred to the mistake of describing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as Wahhabist and the Saudis as Wahhabists, because there is no Wahhabi creed. He pointed out that what Imam Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab did was return to the fundamentals, derived from the Koran, and the sayings and doings of the prophet. In this he was aided by Imam Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. [passage omitted]

The custodian of the two holy mosques expressed his regret at the absence of Iran at this conference, which is a conference of all Muslims, not a Saudi conference.

He expressed the hope that the next Islamic conference would see Iran's presence because Iran is an Islamic state. [passage omitted]

Then 'Ali ibn Hasan al-Sha'ir, information minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and chairman of the conference, spoke. [passage omitted] He praised the Palestinian uprising and said those taking part in the uprising are armed with their faith and that the fuel of the uprising consists of stones and youth.

He also praised the Afghan mujahidin and renewed the determination to continue to support and bolster their struggle and jihad and to lessen their pains and sufferings. [passage omitted]

The conference supported the uprising of the Palestinian people in the face of the Zionist occupation and the disgusting terrorist practices. It also saluted the search for ways to support this uprising to enable the Palestinian people to enjoy their firm and inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and to return to and establish an independent state of Palestine on the homeland's soil, with Jerusalem as its capital under the leadership of the PLO—the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

In this respect, the conference decided upon an informational program in support of the courageous uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The conference also saluted the triumph of the desire for peace, which is a triumph for the true Islamic religion, with its honorable holy principles, and for the unity of Muslims.

The conference is, therefore, optimistically following developments of the conflict with hope that a just and permanent peace may be accomplished in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 598 through the direct negotiations between Iraq and Iran currently taking place to bring about an honorable, just, and permanent peace which guarantees the historical rights of Iraq and confirms its sovereignty over its territories and waters, guarantees the nonintervention in the internal affairs of either of the countries or of the countries of the region, and guarantees the security and freedom of navigation in the Arab Gulf.

The conference expressed opposition to extremism and violence which have presented such a picture of Islam as if it were calling for the letting of blood, the kindling of war, and the committing of aggression against the mosques of God and secure places of worship.

The climax of this deviant course led to bloody aggression against God's holy mosque in Mecca in 1987 at the hands of the mobs in the days in which God had banned obscenity.

The conference expressed its solidarity with the courageous struggle of the Afghan people. It welcomed the Geneva accords concerning the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and noninterference in the internal affairs of this Muslim country.

It expressed its hope that this withdrawal will continue according to the agenda so the Afghan people will be able to determine their own future and to establish the regime of their choice and so the dawning of peace may enable Afghan refugees to voluntarily and securely return to their homes.

The conference condemned the racial discrimination practiced by the South African Government and the Zionist entity. It called upon the Islamic media to support the international trial to be held in Dakar at the beginning of the new year and to condemn all sorts of racial discrimination.

The conference expressed its deep concern over the situation in Lebanon. It emphasized its concern for the independence, unity, Arabism, and total sovereignty of Lebanon over its territory and within its internationally recognized borders.

It also expressed its support for all efforts aimed at national reconciliation among Lebanese and for the Lebanese people to choose the framework of reconciliation which would enable them to get out of its predicament. In this respect, it stressed the necessity of respect for intercommunal harmony in Lebanon.

The conference also strongly condemned Israel's occupation of parts of Lebanon's territory and its continued acts of aggression and crime against civilian residents.

It called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Lebanese territories in accordance with the resolutions of the UN Security Council.

The conference also supported the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah in its legitimate right to exercise its sovereignty over its national soil and territorial waters and to protect itself from every external aggression.

The conference expressed interest in the situation of Islamic minorities in the world and the necessity of supporting them and devoting attention to their affairs to preserve their Islamic identity and legitimate rights.

The conference urged the Bulgarian Government to respect the legitimate rights of the Turkish Muslim minority there so they can practice their faith in total freedom and serenity.

The conference welcomed the resumption of talks between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots. It called on the information media to work towards achieving equality between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

The conference acquainted itself with the situation of Muslims in the Philippines and called on the Philippine Government to implement the Tripoli agreement signed between the Philippine Government and the Moro National Liberation Front.

The conference called on the Islamic information media to show the dimension of the ordeal of the Philippine Muslims to Islamic and international opinions.

The conference showed particular interest in the situation of the INA, the radio organization of Islamic countries, and the ICO Information Department. It supported institutions in playing their role in the best way.

The conference also acquainted itself with the technical studies carried out by Malaysia in connection with the creation of an Islamic television program in preparation of submittal to the member countries.

The conference also denounced the launching of the Israeli satellite for the aggressive action it represents against the Islamic nation.

The conference decided that the Council of Information Ministers meetings will be held regularly every 2 years. It also decided to form a committee at the ministerial level to be chaired by Saudi Arabia.

This committee's members are Kuwait, Senegal, Malaysia, Palestine, Tunisia, and Egypt, in addition to the ICO General Secretariat of the ICO. It will meet once every 6 months and its tasks will be to follow up and implement all the conference resolutions and to consider the restructuring of the ICO information bodies, develop them, and prepare the results of its work for the second conference of the Islamic information ministers and for the permanent committee for cultural affairs and information, as well as for the Islamic foreign ministers conference for submission to the sixth Islamic summit conference.

And in appreciation of the importance of the information mission which rests on the shoulders of Muslims working in the information field and the need to adopt a total sum of moral and behavioral values, it decided in principle to approve the preparation of a draft Islamic information charter of honor and to ask a competent committee to make a complete draft of this plan and present it to the second conference of Islamic information ministers. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

AL-ITTIHAD Cited on U.S. Stand on 242, PLO

JN1910100088 Abu Dhabi WAM in Arabic 0800 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 Oct (WAM)—Press reports in Abu Dhabi today said that Washington has informed the PLO via an Arab capital of the possibility of the U.S. Administration's approval of UN Security Council Resolution 242 as a basis for settling the Middle East issue after amending it and adding to it the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, with the condition that the PLO should abide by not declaring an independent state or forming a provisional government before the U.S. and Israeli elections and that it should agree on a form of confederation with Jordan.

The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD cited informed Palestinian sources as saying this issue will be discussed at the meetings being held in Tunis by the Palestinian factions that are preparing for the coming PNC session, especially since the Palestinian delegation that visited the USSR recently was informed that the U.S. proposal was discussed at the recent meeting between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze at the United Nations.

PLO, Israelis Reportedly Hold Secret Talks

NC1910112288 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1037 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Belgrade, 19 Oct (MENA)—Secret meetings have ended in Belgrade between a Palestinian delegation led by Mahmud 'Abbas, PLO Executive Committee member, and Israeli Knesset Members Matityahu Peled and Muhammad Mi'ari.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd al-Rahim, the director of the PLO office in Belgrade, has stated that the two sides agreed on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with Arab Jerusalem as its capital.

The Palestinian delegation has left for Tunis and the Israeli delegation for Tel Aviv.

Al-Tayyib 'Abd al-Rahim said these meetings between the Palestinian leadership and the democratic forces in Israel which support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to their own state will continue, before and after the Israeli elections.

Observers think this move by the PLO is designed to strengthen the Israeli forces which champion peace against the forces which want the continuation of aggression.

MENA has learned that Yugoslavia played an important role in arranging these meetings, within its efforts to bolster the peace process.

PNC To Meet in Algiers 'Between 8 and 10' Nov
JN1810165588 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Palestinian sources said in Algiers that the PNC will convene in the Algerian capital between 8 and 10 November. The same sources added that the PLO will meet within the next 48 hours to fix the date of the PNC's opening session.

Palestinian Official Previews PNC Session
LD1910091288 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Abu al-'Iz, the PLO representative in Algiers, declared yesterday that the Palestine National Council [PNC], the parliament-in-exile, will convene in Algiers at the beginning of next month. Yasir 'Arafat announced last August Algeria's agreement to host the council's meetings and there has not been any change since, Abu al-'Iz added.

With regard to the date of the council's session, the Palestinian official said the PNC will convene between 31 October and 10 November and that the 3 November referendum to be held in Algeria on the amendment of the Constitution should be taken into consideration.

Abu al-'Iz went on to say that the declaration of independence would also be approved during this session following the Palestinian consensus on this issue.

The Palestinian official said in this respect: An agreement was reached on this subject among all Palestinian factions and the Palestinian state will be built despite the statements made by the Zionist Yitzhaq Shamir who considers the establishment of a Palestinian state as something which might spark off World War III. Abu al-'Iz added: This statement has gone beyond all possible expectations.

Decision on Palestinian State Likely in November
PM1810153388 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic17 Oct 88 pp 1, 2

[Mahir 'Uthman report: "Highly Placed Palestinian Source Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: November Is Most Suitable Time To Declare Independent State"]

[Excerpt] London—With the approach of the Israeli general election and the U.S. presidential election next month, the signs are that the PLO is still considering the best time to issue the unilateral proclamation of an independent Palestinian state in the occupied territories. The decision is expected to be announced in November.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned from a high-ranking Palestinian source who participated in Fatah's recent meetings in Tunisia that, although there is unanimous agreement within the PLO on the principle of declaring an independent Palestinian state, there are various views as to the timing of the announcement and the formation of a Palestinian provisional government.

The source, who wished to remain anonymous, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that one trend within the PLO advocates waiting until after the Israeli elections to see who will be ruling Israel—Labor under Peres or the rightist Likud bloc under Shamir.

He added that "some Palestinian leaders believe that 29 November is the most appropriate date for the proclamation of an independent Palestinian state, because that is the date when the UN General Assembly passed the 1947 resolution partitioning Palestine into two states, one Arab and the other Jewish, namely Resolution 181, on which the Palestinian state proclamation will be based."

The Palestinian source said that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat is almost certain to head the Palestinian provisional government when it is announced, but the source added that the announcement of a provisional government may be postponed until "some appropriate date" after the proclamation of a Palestinian independent state.

The source emphasized that, when it convenes, the PNC could authorize the PLO Central Council to decide the date and formula for the declaration of a state and a provisional government.

On Soviet reaction to the idea of a Palestinian state proclamation, the senior Palestinian source said Moscow had assured the Palestinian leadership it would support any step that would end the Israeli occupation and guarantee the Palestinian people's right of self-determination (an independent state, in other words).

He added that "Moscow continuously stresses the importance of Arab solidarity at this stage in support of Palestinian independence and freedom." [passage omitted]

PLO Adviser Says 'Uprising' 'Will Continue'

LD1810204788 Kuwait KUNA in English 1716 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Kuwait, Oct 18 (KUNA)—Bassam Abu Sharif, advisor to the PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, stressed here tonight that the ongoing Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation will continue despite the organized barbaric Israeli oppression.

He added that the only alternative before the Palestinian people is either freedom and liberation from occupation or continuing their resistance to this occupation.

The Palestinian official in a statement to KUNA strongly criticized statements yesterday by the Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and war minister Yitzhaq Rabin in which they called for halting the 11-month-old uprising against holding of elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rabin and Peres, who threatened to crush the uprising by force, said the elections will aim at choosing new representatives for the Palestinians who would take part in negotiations to work out a transitional solution on future of the occupied territories which will be also put for referendum before the Jewish settlers.

"What Peres and Rabin has said show that the leadership of the Israeli Labour Party, as it is the same case with the Likud, is the least serious of concerned about genuine peace in the region and they still deal with facts with closed eyes," Abu Sharif said.

At the same time, he emphasised, the Palestinian people, led by PLO, are sincere in their search for just peace as clarified by Yasir 'Arafat before the European Parliament in Strasbourg recently.

Abu Sharif added that while the Palestinian people continue to extend their hands for peace they are determined to continue their resistance to the Israeli occupation because this is their rights and [words indistinct] as stipulated by all international laws, humanitarian creeds and U.N. Charter.

Abu Sharif arrived here Tuesday on a brief visit for talks with concerned officials at the Ministry of Information on means for best coverage of the uprising.

Egypt

'Text' of AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM Mubarak Interview

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[Text] Cairo, 18 Oct (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has declared that he is determined to maintain democracy. He said that in his exercise of power he relies on the Egyptian people, without whom he would be unable to accomplish anything. The president added that he is confident the people are aware and appreciate the circumstances in which we are living.

President Mubarak announced that he is not planning to end subsidies, but to gradually reduce them within the framework of economic reform policies. He said: "Notwithstanding numerous problems, I want to maintain democracy and I will not restrict freedom of expression." He said he will continue to speak openly to the people about all problems and will not make deceptive or bright promises.

President Husni Mubarak stressed that he appreciates the positions of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, "who support us in public and also in matters which are not made public." He expressed total satisfaction with the honorable stands of these countries.

His excellency noted that there is no need for disputes about a unified military force that will create differences about who will assume command of such a force and where it will be stationed. He said we do not need disagreements that increase divisions and do not serve Arab objectives.

Referring to implementation of the ruling restoring Tabah to Egypt, President Husni Mubarak announced: "We are committed to implementing it. I also believe that Israel will commit itself to implementing it. Israel realizes that if it does not implement the ruling this will affect relations between the two countries."

These statements came in a comprehensive and frank interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM, conducted on the 8th anniversary of Mubarak's assumption of the Presidency. The paper will publish the interview tomorrow, in Wednesday's edition.

His excellency announced that the initiative by the amir of Kuwait on how to confront Third World debts has proven that he is a stateman who is concerned with the problems of developing countries. President Mubarak also declared that it is necessary to amend the Arab League Charter, and said restoration of Egypt's membership to the league is in Arab hands.

President Husni Mubarak has urged the Palestinians to postpone declaration of a state and provisional government until after the U.S. and Israeli elections because any just observer must understand the effect that international issues have on the Arab-Israeli conflict and, consequently, on future Palestinian decisions. He said we must wait until the time is favorable to the Arab cause so that those who seek private ends will not benefit from the election climate in those countries.

His excellency pointed out that any decision made by the PLO must be one that is appealing, not just to nonaligned countries but also to countries that can influence Israel, such as the United States and European countries, "or we will lose all European and U.S. support...and Israel will get it."

The president announced that he trusts Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and his ability to achieve a peaceful solution. He declared that no agreement has been reached with Tehran concerning Egyptian POW's, saying "the battle was not between Egypt and Iran."

His excellency asserted that he had rejected a U.S. proposal to attack Libya from Egyptian territory. He also declared that he does not want to comment on statements made by Al-Qadhdhafi.

Regarding Lebanon and Algeria, President Mubarak said that what is taking place in Lebanon is a dangerous game that may lead to the loss of Lebanon. He warned against partitioning the country because this will lead to yet further extremism, disputes, and disintegration. He called on all parties to refrain from interfering in Lebanon.

On Algeria, President Mubarak referred to his appeal to the Algerian people to calm down and halt their acts of violence. In this appeal, which was motivated by nationalist feelings, Mubarak pointed out that riots and violence in any country affect the economic situation and it is the people who eventually pay the price.

Mubarak said: "I attempted earlier to get in touch with Algeria. They did not respond; the way they talked to us was unexpected and we viewed it as totally unacceptable. I do not use such a method with any country."

President Mubarak expressed his hope that detente between the United States and the Soviet Union will benefit the countries of the world. He noted that Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union are good, and stated that the resumption of relations between the Soviet Union and Israel will not harm Arab isues.

President Mubarak's interview was given to 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Masa'id, the proprietor and chief editor of AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM. In the publicity notice which it carried about the interview, the paper described Mubarak as "the skillful captain" who had led Egypt's ship to stability, democracy, and justice, and made political stability his people's strategic goal. He had charted three hallmarks for his rule: stability, development, and democracy.

The following is the text of President Mubarak's interview with AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM:

[Al-Masa'id] Your Excellency, your many achievements are a testimony to your wise and rational approach to solving problems and crises in the interests of the Egyptian people. You have opened up new vistas in Arab and international relations in the 7 years since you assumed power. What are your most interesting achievements and what is your great dream for the future as your 8th year in office begins?

[Mubarak] Praise be to God, since I assumed power in October 1981, I have been eager to stress the importance of democracy, stability, and development. Democracy is a bastion for security and stability. We can confront all problems, obstacles, and economic crises through democracy and freedom. We are going through a difficult economic stage, like any other Third World country, as a result of soaring world prices. There have been excesses by the opposition parties. Some of them speak the language of terrorism; others support this course; and still others imagine that demonstrations and acts of violence will occur, as has happened in other countries. Despite this, I have been anxious to maintain democracy and freedom, and to tell the people all the facts honestly.

I trust the people's awareness and understanding of the conditions we are living in. To be clear with you, there are certain important issues under study. I cannot discuss these issues or tell the people about them until the study is completed. I am taking society's interests and the people's circumstances into account. The people understand these circumstances and know what our difficulties are. Regrettably, there are certain parties that are trying to exploit these circumstances and the rise in prices. This sometimes prompts me to speak to the people to explain the causes of the price rises to them. The price of a ton of wheat, which previously was $70, rose to $110 in January and to $171 in August; that is, the price of wheat doubled in 1 year.

Despite all these facts which I present to the people, we find to our extreme regret that some parties are resorting to oneupmanship with the aim of inciting the masses. These parties are telling the citizens that the price of the loaf will increase. Unfortunately, certain writers confuse matters in a strange way. I found out that some people are mixing subsidized flour with other kinds of flour and are selling the Al-Tabaqi loaf for 10 or 15 piasters. In view of these people's exploitation of the subsidized flour and their fraudulent acts, we proposed that the government should manufacture this loaf and sell it for 5 piasters only, without harming the other subsidized loaf which is being sold for 2 piasters. This would enable the citizen to choose either loaf.

Furthermore, we find that certain parties are talking about lifting the subsidy. Actually I am not thinking of removing the subsidy, but I am thinking of reducing it gradually as part of our economic reform policy. This will take a long time—possibly at least 10 years.

There will be no increase in the price of the loaf without referring the matter to the masses and without putting all the facts before them, as we did in the past when we explained to the people that the price of wheat had reached $200 a ton. I am used to being frank with the masses and I will continue to pursue this road.

Despite the numerous problems, I am eager to preserve democracy. I will not restrict freedom of expression, and the road is open to every journalist, writer, and man of opinion to say what he wants. I do not blame certain writers, for they had been deprived of freedom for a long time and had suffered from the restriction imposed on their freedom. I believe that it will take years to treat these excesses and to guide these ideas and opinions. We do not need to impose restrictions or apply specific measures to restrict this democratic freedom. I would also like to say that, during their talks and congresses, some party leaders call for more freedom and democracy.

I say to them that had it not been for the freedom and democracy that we have, not a single party leader, citizen, writer, or journalist would have been able to say or write whatever he likes in the press, party centers, or the streets of Egypt. Nonetheless, I understand the situation that these people are in. Sometimes I call on them and ask them to respect their country and not to resort to excesses or defamation. I also tell them that their way is an improper one.

Some people proposed that I should talk to the people about promises and projects, even if these were not honored or implemented. But I will never resort to such a method. I would rather continue to be frank with the masses and tell them about all the problems without making false or glittering promises. I will never deceive the people because if I resort to this method our standards will decline. We must be honest with the masses so that they will understand their society and will join us in working out solutions for these problems.

The government is making every effort to play its required role. We must all help the government work out the solutions and impose the necessary people's supervision to control price increases. This is not the responsibility of the government alone. The people must realize that they have a major role to play in maintaining stability and in striking at the greedy and the exploiters.

[Al-Masa'id] Your Excellency Mr President, it has been said that your rule has not begun yet, meaning that you have private plans, theories, philosophies, and views on government and leadership which you will not put into practice until you have finished dealing with the accumulations of the past. When will Mubarak's real rule begin, Mr President?

[Mubarak] My rule began when I assumed the Presidency. I have been rectifying errors in some spheres which had been accumulating for 70 years. Would it be reasonable for me to dismiss all those who are part of

political and economic life in every field? Am I required to dismiss a whole generation which has participated in government since the era of the monarchy, through the age of the Liberation Committee, the National Union, and the Arab Socialist Union? Shall I immobilize all those who are now on top? I am implementing democracy and I rely in my exercise of power on the people. I am confident that the people understand the circumstances. Without the people I cannot do anything.

Some are urging me to enforce the law strictly. My answer is that I trust the law and the Egyptian judicial system. The courts are capable of judging those who make mistakes. I do not interfere with the courts or their verdicts. I will not cover up corruption and deviation, regardless of who is guilty of it. All are equal before the law. We must respect the courts and the verdicts they pass. Hence the law takes its natural course and the courts enjoy an independence that is beyond any intervention. I am very far from passing judgement or making accusations because this is the prerogative of the courts. I am strict in the sense that I am not lenient with the guilty. I leave it to the court to have its say. This is my method and it is a civilized one.

[Al-Masa'id] Your Excellency Mr President. It appears that, in the wake of the announcement of the government's decisions freezing the activities of the capital investment companies and reviewing their status, this problem has caused numerous difficulties and obstructions for the depositors, after these companies stopped paying the interest on savings. How will you remedy this problem which currently worries many Egyptian citizens both at home or abroad?

[Mubarak] A great deal was said about the capital investment companies before the last law was passed. We had to think of a plan to remedy any excesses and to save the citizens from what was happening as a result of the activities of these companies. The companies used to place huge advertisements in newspapers and magazines with the aim of attracting a large number of depositors, including Egyptians living abroad. They offered interest of 20 percent and exploited every opportunity. Whenever they participated in exhibitions or whenever I visited factories and met citizens they used to publish photographs of themselves in my company, to prove the claim they made to people that I supported those companies.

In reality, if the law which was recently approved by the People's Assembly had been passed 6 months earlier, the owners of these companies would have told the depositors that the government was responsible for limiting the interest rates. They would have claimed that they wanted to pay 20, 30, or 40 percent interest. However, after they announced that they would establish a giant consortium and stopped paying the depositors' money, we had to pass the law to save what could still be saved. We also had to do it before some of the owners of the companies could escape abroad. The law came at the right time, and we made it clear that we were not against those companies. We said we supported investment companies if they were real and serious ones.

Despite what has happened, certain companies have, regrettably, sent me a number of the depositors. They came to the gate of the Presidential Palace and it turns out they deposited their funds in 1988 despite reports about violations by these companies and despite a statement by the Central Bank president. I will give you an example: I spoke to one of these depositors and asked him if he wasn't afraid of losing funds invested at 20 or 22 percent with an unguaranteed establishment. He replied that he made profits that exceeded the money he had deposited. That is what happened.

We are asking these companies to streamline their transactions. We are not trying to seize their funds, but we are asking them to make sound investments. We want the depositors' funds to be guaranteed so that they can get them back when they want. We also want them to invest in serious projects.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, we have heard that certain companies have begun to refuse to give depositors their money. What is the solution?

[Mubarak] Certain companies are currently streamlining to prove that they are serious companies. We stand by these companies as long as they are serious and work in the interest of the Egyptian economy. I, however, appeal to citizens to deposit their funds in reliable establishments, such as banks. If a bank tells you it has no money, the state will gurantee your funds. When a citizen concludes a paper contract with a certain capital investment company, the state cannot guarantee these funds. That investor cannot demand that I pay what he paid into the company in accordance with a contract between them.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad, the amir of Kuwait, introduced at the UN a new initiative to resolve the Third World's foreign debts problem. He stessed that Kuwait is ready to contribute, along with other countries, to the preparation of an international formula to settle this problem. What do you think of the Kuwaiti initiative?

[Mubarak] After I read what my brother Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad said, my love, appreciation, and esteem for him increased. His stature rose in Egypt and throughout the Third World. With this overture, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah has proven that he is a stateman who is concerned with the problems of developing countries. We appreciate his feelings and sacrifices to push the wheel of development in the Third World. His speech at the UN was the best proposal from a creditor, not debtor, country. It is a call for all countries to follow suit. It is a splendid and honorable stand by Kuwait. I greet my brother Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

[Al-Masa'id] When the unanimous Arab decision was made to resume full diplomatic relations with Egypt early this year, it was thought the rich Arab countries might take practical steps to contribute to consolidating Egypt's economy and expand Arab investment in Egypt. What is noticeable so far, however, is that there is some slowness and hesitation. Can you explain this?

[Mubarak] Our relations with the Arab brothers are good, but, regrettably, the Arab movement is slow. Certain things take longer than necessary. Nevertheless, I appreciate the positions adopted by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, who support us in public and also in matters which are not made public. I am completely satisfied with the honorable stands of these countries.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, to what extent is Egypt ready to participate in establishing a joint Egyptian-Arab force to defend national security against external threats? How does Egypt view the formation of this joint force? And are there contacts to draft a new Arab defense agreement with Egypt's participation?

[Mubarak] I believe the best way to proceed at this time is to work to strengthen ties and coordination at all meetings, so that should anything happen in any country we would have a comprehensive concept enabling us to choose the best method of resolving any unforeseen crises. Actually, if we think of a joint Arab force, we would be fighting from many directions and along various axes inside and outside the Arab world.

This force would be interpreted differently at a time when we are supposed to be a force with specific objectives and cooperate among ourselves. There is no need for disputes and talk about a joint military force. We do not want to differ over who should assume the command and on whose land this force should be based. We don't need differences of this kind, which only deepen division and do not serve Arab objectives.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, 2 weeks have already passed since the ruling that Tabah should be returned to Egypt. Israel has not moved to comply with and implement this ruling. Are you confident that Israel is committed to implementing it, or has the implementation been postponed until after the Israeli election?

[Mubarak] The ruling is binding. For our part, we are committed to implement it. We must send a letter to the court in this regard within 20 days from the issuance of the ruling. We will have to wait for 9 days, and the implementation will commence within 45 days. I believe that for its part Israel will commit itself to implementing the court's ruling. I think that Israeli Prime Minister Shamir's statements corroborate this.

Israel is well aware that if it fails to implement the ruling this will affect relations between the two countries. I believe that Israel is anxious not to make this happen. Egypt, likewise, wishes to maintain the stability of relations. We both accepted the ruling of the international arbitration body and, consequently, both of us must be committed to implementing what we agreed upon earlier.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, some political circles in the region believe that Egypt, the United States, and the EC states are counting on Shim'on Peres to win the Israeli election, in light of his undertaking to work out a historic agreement with the PLO and to attend an international cofnerence. Is this true?

[Mubarak] This is an internal issue and is up to the citizens of Israel. We deal with the government that is elected by the Israeli people and we do not interfere in their domestic affairs. We will accept any government which comes to power, be it a Likud or a Labor Party government.

We appreciate Peres' stand on the question of an international conference. Shamir has more than once responded to some letters, but the dispute is always over the international peace conference. I ask Shamir not to be afraid of an international conference. For our part, we are not afraid of an international conference or of solving the problem through negotiations.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, your appeal and advice to the PLO leaders to postpone the declaration of a Palestinian state and provisional government until after the Israeli and U.S. elections stem from a political conviction that the current regional and international circumstances are inappropriate for such a move. How do you explain this and are there other Arab and world leaders who agree with this view?

[Mubarak] Any fair observer must understand the effect that international issues have on the Arab-Israeli conflict and, consequently, on future Palestinian decisions. Therefore, we must wait until the time is favorable to the Arab cause so that those who seek private ends will not benefit from the election climate in those countries. We must scrutinize and study all possibilities.

Our decisions must not be emotional or sentimental. We must benefit from the lessons of the past so that the issue does not drag on any longer than necessary. We must frustrate the plans of those who want to capitalize on and benefit from the elections. We must study the situation very carefully. Our decisions must not be rigid. We must not ignore the international situation.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, what will the required political steps be if the Palestinian leaders, through the PNC, declare the charter of an independent Palestinian state on the basis of the 1947 partition resolution 181?

[Mubarak] I am afraid that the expression "partition resolution" will be misinterpreted. It is possible that the Israelis may understand this phrase differently. It is

possible that Israel may understand that Palestine comprises all of Israel, although this interpretation is not in line with the partition resolution, which explained everything. I am afraid that the international community—East and West—will stand on Israel's side.

Therefore, I warn against this. I have spoken with the PLO brothers on this subject. I have asked the Palestinian leaders to bide their time and study the situation carefully. Any decision made by the PLO must be one that appeals not just to nonaligned countries but also to countries that can influence Israel, such as the United States and the European countries. Otherwise, we will lose all European and U.S. support, and Israel will get it.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, I can say you are in the forefront of those Arab leaders who are throwing all their weight and political effort into the search for peace in the region. Do you believe that the current historical phase which the Arabs and Israel are going through is really suitable for achieving comprehensive peace? Do the Arabs have any trump cards to enable them to achieve a just settlement and do you believe that 1989 will be the year of the international conference?

[Mubarak] At present I cannot say that 1989 will be the year of the international conference, because so far there has been no coordination among the Arab states on this subject. If we agree and arrive at a common concept, if the PLO agrees with us at an Arab summit conference, and if the world feels that the Arab nation has agreed on one view and is frank and realistic, then in this case we will get international support. We, as an Arab nation, are in a position to reach such an agreement and we do not lag behind the European states in this regard.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, why has the plan of reviving the Arab Industrialization Organization [AIO] been delayed, especially since numerous Arab leaders and senior officials have lauded the remarkable development of the Egyptian military industry? Can this delay be attributed to political or financial reasons?

[Mubarak] There is no problem with the AIO as it exists and has been functioning without problems, except for some frozen funds and we are working to resolve that issue. I stress here that increased financing will undoubtedly serve the Arab nation. We have a very big base for war production and the AIO also has great potential. This, I believe, benefits all Arabs, not only Egypt. These matters are very distant from politics.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, Israel's launch of its first spy satellite has met with various reactions in the Arab region. How do you view this grave event in Egypt? Can we expect an Arab satellite to be launched in the future, especially since you have stressed the capability to produce an Arab satellite and enter into space projects?

[Mubarak] There is no danger from the Israeli satellite as most countries have satellites orbiting in space and taking pictures of everything. It is not something new. We, as an Arab nation, can possess more than one satellite if we agree to manufacture one because of money and technical capabilities that exist in Egypt and in some Arab countries. It is time we stopped sitting and releasing useless communiques and statements.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, the Lebanese crisis is now entering a very complicated phase, threatening partition of Lebanese territory. What is Egypt's stand on this pan-Arab crisis? What is the solution in your view and who is the genuine presidential candidate needed by Lebanon at this stage?

[Mubarak] I feel sad for Lebanon. What is happening there is a game in which Lebanon may perish. The destruction of Lebanon will result in dangers that will threaten the borders of countries adjacent to Lebanon. I am warning against the partition of Lebanon because this will lead to extremism, strong disputes, and disintegration. This in itself endangers Syria, first and before any other state in the region.

I hold the view that Lebanon must be left to its sons and people to decide whatever they wish, without meddling by anyone in Lebanon's internal affairs. I urge all parties to leave Lebanon alone. I believe that if these countries, which are now interfering in Lebanon, leave her alone, the Lebanese people will be able to resolve their problems and will choose their president and prime minister by themselves, for the sake of Lebanon's unity.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, there have been reports about contacts and Arab and foreign mediation between Egypt and Syria aimed at bringing about a reconciliation between you and the Syrian president. How true are these reports?

[Mubarak] My relationship with President Hafiz al-Asad needs absolutely no mediation. We have had contacts. The Syrian president is a man of goodwill and I met with him in Kuwait. I am astonished at what is being said and published regarding mediation between Egypt and Syria, and also at what is being said about proposals made to Egypt regarding mediation with Libya. This talk has no basis in fact.

To begin with, I reject this method. Mediation attempts between Egypt and Libya now number about 40, and nothing has been achieved. Some 2 years ago the number of envoys exceeded 30. I used to listen to them and show responsiveness to all their proposals. However, I did not discuss the issue of opening the border as this will not happen until I feel absolutely reassured about their intentions. Al-Qadhdhafi always talks about opening the border to have an outlet and a justification for his remarks.

Al-Qadhdhafi halted his invective after I sent back the Libyan planes which had landed in Eypt, but, regrettably, he resumed his attacks on Egypt and his abuse 4 days after their return. I reject this method. I repeat that there had been a prior agreement that Al-Qadhdhafi and I would meet to talk about the border issue. Al-Qadhdhafi asked that media campaigns by both countries be halted before the meeting. The abuse, however, continued in a worse manner than before. Then it was said that Al-Qadhdhafi would meet with me abroad. The meeting, however, did not take place. I asked, as a first step, that Egyptian planes be allowed to land in Libya and Libyan planes in Egypt. Al-Qadhdhafi refused.

On one occasion I met with the former U.S. national security adviser when he visited Egypt. He wanted us to cooperate with the United States in launching an attack on Libya, using joint forces that would attack from Egyptian territory. I absolutely refused to do this and a U.S. newspaper reported my refusal. Later Al-Qadhdhafi said there was an Egyptian-Israeli-U.S. plan to attack Libya. I do not want to comment on this.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, your statements about the Algerian incidents were well received in Arab circles. Do you expect there to be any contacts between Cairo and Algiers in the near future?

[Mubarak] Proceeding from my Arab affiliation and my love for my people and the Arab homeland, I considered it my duty not to remain silent or be a mere spectator. Hence my appeal to the Algerian people to exercise restraint and end the violence. I told them that disturbances or violence in any country will affect its economy. The people would lose eventually. I appealed to the Algerian people, saying that demonstrations and violence would not solve the problem, that Algeria was part of the Third World and we were all passing through the same economic circumstances, and that the people must understand these circumstances and attept to resolve their problems without violence.

I said I hoped that calm would prevail in Algeria so that development would continue and the people's living standards would rise. This appeal, as I have stated, proceeded from a nationalist stance. I attempted earlier to get in touch with Algeria. I am sorry to say they did not respond; the way they talked to us was unexpected. They tried to twist our arm. We viewed this as totally unacceptable. I do not use such a method in dealing with any country. I had not imagined or expected that it could come from Algeria. For our part, we are willing to restore relations with Algeria. If it has no desire to restore relations, that is Algeria's concern.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, an Arab summit conference will be convened in the near future. There is consensus in the Arab world on the need for Egypt's return to the Arab League so that it may assume its pan-Arab role in the league and shoulder its responsibilities at this serious stage through which the Arab nation is passing. Do you expect the Arab leaders to adopt this pan-Arab resolution? Do you think that it has become necessary to amend the Arab League Charter?

[Mubarak] I appreciate the Arab brothers' role and feelings toward Egypt and toward myself in particular. Regarding Egypt's return to the Arab League, this is up to the Arabs. Certain people view the return of the Arab League headquarters to Egypt with apprehension. I tell them that I do not impose anything on anyone. Egypt is full of headquarters and offices of international organizations. I do demand that the Arab League Charter be changed. We cannot apply the charter that was signed in the 1940's because circumstances have changed completely since then.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, how do you assess the changes in the Arab Gulf region in the wake of the cease-fire, the state of caution along the Iran-Iraq war front, and the effects of this situation on the security of the Gulf and the Middle East? How do you evaluate the stalled peace talks?

[Mubarak] I hope with all my heart that tranquillity will prevail in this region because any trouble there will affect Egypt. The region is not far away from us; it concerns us and will affect us whether we like it or not. Our future depends on calm and stability in the Gulf region because it is a vital part of the Arab nation. Concerning the halt to the Iran-Iraq war. I do not think that the war will be renewed between the two countries. I call on the international community and those countries that have good relations with both Iran and Iraq to continue their consultations to bring views closer together and resolve problems peacefully.

I have great confidence in President Saddam Husayn because he calls for dialogue and for the peaceful resolution of disputes. I expect the negotiations between the two countries to continue for a long time, like any other negotiations. I trust President Saddam Husayn's wisdom. I believe that it is important that the Iranians should exhibit an equal degree of flexibility and good faith. They should not waste more money and shed more blood or destroy the interests of their peoples. Wars are against the interests of the people. As developing countries we must consider the economic and social levels of our populations to improve the standard of living of the Arab and Islamic peoples. We have had enough wars and bloodshed.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, the date for King Fahd's visit to Cairo has been fixed. Are there any arrangements for visits by other Arab leaders to Cairo?

[Mubarak] I am surprised by the newspaper reports on King Fahd's visit. I would like to say that all the reports are mere speculation. King Fahd will visit Egypt. We always consult each other and we are in constant touch.

Regarding his visit to Cairo, there are arrangements and consultations but the date has not been determined. I ask the newspapers to stop speculating.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, it has been said that some regional and international parties are trying to open a dialogue between Cairo and Tehran. Is this true and is there anything new regarding Egyptian prisoners in Iran?

[Mubarak] Actually, there has been more than one contact on restoration of relations between the two countries, but I have postponed the matter until the situation affecting our brothers in the Gulf and Iraq becomes clear, and also until intentions become clear.

As for Egyptian prisoners, no agreement has been reached between Iran and Egypt because the battle was not between the Iranians and Egypt, but between Iraq and Iran.

[Al-Masa'id] With the current U.S.-Soviet detente, forecasts indicate this region will witness in this century a joint U.S.-Soviet plan to find solutions for regional and international problems, above all the Gulf war and the Middle East conflict. What is your view of these forecasts?

[Mubarak] I hope the detente between the Soviet Union and the United States is in the interest of all countries. We are in contact with all the states concerned to solve the conflict so that we may focus on our own problems. I hope stability will prevail in the region.

[Al-Masa'id] What about your upcoming visit to the Soviet Union? What are the most important issues you will discuss with the Soviet leaders? Is it conceivable Egyptian-Soviet relations will be restored as they were during the 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's?

[Mubarak] Our relations with the Soviet Union are good. There is joint cooperation between the two countries. Not everything published in the press about an upcoming visit, its timing, and other such speculation is true.

[Al-Masa'id] There are ongoing Soviet-Israeli contacts to resume full diplomatic relations. Do you believe the return of the Soviet Union to playing a role in the Middle East and participating in an international conference follows the establishment of Israeli-Soviet relations?

[Mubarak] Israel has always maintained that there should be relations between it and the Soviet Union before the international conference is convened to guarantee the Soviet Union will not be biased in favor of the Arabs. I believe the resumption of Soviet-Israeli relations will not harm the Arab cause.

We must not forget the Soviet Union stood on Israel's side when it was established and supported its admission to the United Nations. The socialist countries are cooperating with Israel and restoring relations with it. The whole world is following this course because Israel is a state recognized internationally.

[Al-Masa'id] The U.S. election campaign between Bush and Dukakis has entered a phase of bargaining, maneuvering, and political deals, especially on the Middle East crisis and the Palestinian issue, because of pressure by the Zionist lobby on the two candidates.

In your opinion, how will these deals affect the positions of the new U.S. President and the future of the peace process and international conference?

[Mubarak] The statements released during the current U.S. election campaign are similar to statements made during previous U.S. presidential elections. However, after the storm dies down and a new U.S. President is elected, he will formulate his strategy on the basis of reality and far from the influence of the election.

[Al-Masa'id] Mr President, do you believe that the triumph of Republican candidate George Bush in the U.S. election would mean that the new U.S. Administration will be committed to U.S. President Reagan's affirmation with regard to the recognition of the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people? Do you envisage the contrary should Dukakis win?

[Mubarak] I believe that the U.S. Administration has its own bases and principles which are binding on succeeding presidents.

[Al-Masa'id] Your Excellency's recent European tour has been described as successful. Can you tell us about its most important results, and do you envisage a European role in the Middle East amid a new U.S.-Soviet detente?

[Mubarak] What counts is that we should exchange views and visits with the European countries and continue to strengthen our relations with them. Hence the importance of the exchange of bilateral visits and consultations. We need to consult with the European countries so that we may obtain their support for our Arab rights. We also need to establish cooperation with them in all domains.

We must continue our consultations and visits. During my meetings with the leaders of these countries I speak to them frankly about our problems. I talk to them about the Gulf war, the Middle East cause, and all of the region's issues. This should take place from time to time.

AL-AKHBAR Urges 'Practical' PLO Decisions

JN1810195688 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 17 Oct 88 p 5

[Editorial: "The Palestinian Uprising and Israel's Elections"]

[Text] When the Israeli elections are held at the beginning of next month, the daring Palestinian uprising will have almost entered its 12th month, a full year during which resurgence in the occupied territories never waned, violently rocking the nerves of Tel Aviv rulers, so much so that some of them have lost balance.

The Israeli authorities' hopes in the possibility of controlling the situation in the West Bank and Gaza have been frustrated, despite all the methods and weapons used in an accelerating way, and despite insistence on disregarding every international or human law and norm.

The U.S. LOS ANGELES TIMES has stressed that Israel's constant attempts and its various methods to suppress the Palestinian uprising, including attempts to kill the agricultural sector in the occupied territories, have failed.

Opinion polls in Israel have revealed that the subject of the Palestinian uprising and the future of the territories that Israel occupies by force will have a decisive effect on the results of the forthcoming Israeli elections. Also, 60 percent of those covered by the polls said they prefer withdrawal from the occupied territories in return for peace. The number of Israelis calling for this is increasing day after day.

What is required at this stage is to intensify Arab support for the heroes of the Palestinian uprising so that it can continue to escalate, strengthen, and be an effective backer of all the decisions that the PLO will take in the coming weeks. At the same time, we urge the PLO to reap the fruits of the uprising on the political scene through its forthcoming decisions, which ought to be practical, realistic, and carefully thought out.

Palestinian 'Advocates' in Israel 'Increasing'

JN1810201988 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Oct 88 p 7

[Editorial: "Absent Conscience"]

[Text] Prior to the general elections of next November, Israel has almost become divided along three lines constituting public opinion. The first one is strict. It includes a major portion of the ruling authorities, in addition to the advocates of the use of force against the uprising in the army and extremist parties.

The second is the line of reconciliation. It comprises civilian and military officials and some of the ruling men and members of moderate parties. This line generally believes that there must be a political solution to guarantee Israel's future, although the advocates of this line have various approaches in this regard.

The third line comprises a large number of uninterested or passive people who are usually described in public opinion polls as those who do not have an opinion yet.

Perhaps this last front encompasses the majority of the Israeli public whose votes are competed for by the rival parties in the next elections. This front was defined clearly by the Israeli writer Behushwa [name as published], comparative literature professor at Haifa University, when he said in a statement to the U.S. magazine NEWSWEEK that a large number of Israelis, because of the uprising, do not want to read newspapers or watch television. Perhaps by this he meant those who wanted by this practice to avoid knowing facts.

He compared their stand to the Germans in the World War II when they used to claim that they knew nothing about the massacres of the Jews. He said that the journalists task in this regard is to beat the heads of people with facts and make them aware of what is going on.

The Israeli writer, who is the favorite among youths in particular, affirmed that he has been calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state and recognizing the PLO for 21 years. He said the Israeli intellectuals were few 21 years ago, but today he knows at least six ministers from the Labor Party who share this opinion.

We conclude from this that the advocates of the worthiness of the Palestinian cause are increasing among politicians and intellectuals. We also conclude that the spread of this call among the Israeli public, especially among those who still prefer to ignore facts, is possible with the passage of time, the uprising's steadfastness, the Palestinian leaders' ability to make the appropriate political moves, and holding contacts with this new trend to awaken the absent conscience.

Sudan

Anya Nya II Official Asks Defectors To Return

EA1710120588 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Speech by Anya Nya II Politburo member Mohammad Shuol; recorded—date, place not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Brothers and sisters in the south and all sons of Sudan, a fact which we must communicate to everyone, so that they understand, is that there are differences now between the SPLA and those who split, as they say [defected from Anya Nya II to SPLA] on how the forces should be comprised.

According to very reliable information, all our officers who left us and whom the SPLA was happy to receive, have refused to serve under the command of the so-called SPLA or SPLM. They are presently staying in completely separate camps.

From this point we are addressing this call to them: Return to your areas. We will receive you in Anya Nya II. No one should think that he might be arrested or killed.

The second point is addressed to the officers, NCO's and soldiers of the western zone. There are individuals who have a strong wish to return. We also tell these that Major General Paulino Matib gave instructions to all of you to return as soon as possible. Anyone can give himself up in Abyei, Rub Kona, Mayom or go directly to where our forces are in every area. This is what we want to say to all our brothers.

Concerning military operations, as mentioned on Thursday [13 Oct], our forces under the command of Colonel Abraham Paul Chuol carried out very large and successful operations.

These resulted in the surrender of 221 Dinkas of Atar, with all their weapons. They received every support and assistance from Anya Nya II forces. Now they are affiliated in the Anya Nya II ranks.

In the Akobo area, large numbers handed themselves over to Col Koko and are currently fighting side by side with him against the traitors in the Pibor and Akobo surrounding areas.

Now, brothers and sisters we want to comment on the SPLA statements. You must have all heard a statement by one of those stupid people who called himself the SPLA spokesman in which he warned that the SPLA would shoot down civilian planes trying to carry relief to hungry people in the south and to the other areas which border the south. This talk, naturally, leads us to stress to the people and convinces people that SPLA intentions are against the sons of the south and against the backward areas. This has become clear through these threats.

However, we want to stress to all people in Sudan that what the SPLA is saying about shooting down planes which land at all the areas mentioned is a lie. They can never shoot down any plane in the areas which we have completely secured. We say to all our people that by now you must know who your enemy is, and who wants to starve you and make you die of disease. [passage omitted]

SPLA-SPLM Delegate on Talks With DUP

EA1810163988 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] In answer to questions raised by our correspondent covering the present talks, Commander Lam Akol Ajawin, the head of the SPLM-SPLA side, said that these talks are a sequel to the earlier meeting held between the two delegations last August and that the two delegations are determined to see that the meetings come to a successful conclusion.

In his own assessment of the prospects for the talks, Commander Lam Akol replied that, judging from the spirit the meetings held so far, he is very optimistic about the outcome.

On Al-Sadiq's claim that the SPL-SPLA agreed three times to a meeting between John Garang and Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, only to pull out at last moment, Commander Lam Akol said that such a claim does not hold water, adding that it is a shameless, naked lie originated in one man's assumptions and unilateral decisions. The present meeting with the DUP [Democratic Unionist Party] is by itself an answer to Al-Sadiq's claims.

Why does the DUP find it easy to talk with the movement and the Ummah Party find it difficult, he asked? The fact is that Al-Sadiq does not believe in institutions: He believes in the Ummah Party and the Ummah Party is him. Commander Lam Akol stressed that SPLM-SPLA and the DUP are doing what institutions do, while Al-Sadiq wants individual talks.

This, he said, clearly indicates Al-Sadiq's lack of confidence in the Sudanese people and in political forces. This is the same Al-Sadiq who boasts of having turned Sudan into an oasis of democracy in the Middle East and Africa. Who can believe in him, asked Comander Lam Akol?

On whether the movement is ready to meet the Ummah Party Commander Lam Akol said that it is the movement's declared policy to meet all the political forces in Sudan which are serious in the search for a lasting peace. The movement is more than ready to meet the Ummah Party if the latter so wishes. But so far we have not received any request for a meeting from the Ummah Party, concluded Commander Lam Akol Ajawin.

Torit 'Cut Off' by SPLA Forces

EA1810163388 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] A correspondent accompanying "Bright Star" campaign says the Bright Star campaign forces have completely demolished the large Khawr English bridge over the Kudo River and have extensively mined the road between Liria and Nasit near Juba.

These two measures, and SPLA ambushes between Liria and Nasit have effectively cut off Torit.

Iran's Sheykholeslam Talks With Culture Minister

LD1810131388 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Mr Sheykholeslam, deputy foreign minister for African and Arab countries' affairs, who is currently in Sudan, has met with 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad Hasan, the Sudanese culture and information minister to discuss bilateral cooperation in the cultural and propaganda spheres.

Mr Sheykholeslam described the process of peace talks. He said: The Iraqi regime has forced the talks to progress slowly by refusing to cooperate fully with the UN secretary general.

The Sudanese minister praised Iran for aiming to establish peace and security in the region. He said: We follow the process of peace closely, and we consider it the duty of all Muslim countries to adopt positions which assist the establishment of lasting peace in the region.

Defense Minister Meets PRC Envoy
LD1810211788 Khartoum SUNA in English 1718 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Khartoum, Oct 18 (SUNA)—Minister of Defence General Ret 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil has reviewed with the Chinese ambassador to Sudan cooperation between the two countries and ways of their promotion.

This came here today in a meeting between Khalil and the Chinese ambassador.

Radio Criticizes Kenyan Support of Rebels
EA1810140988 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Yesterday's newspapers reported intense activity at the rebel movement's political office in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. This comes after its members obtained permits to remain on Kenyan territory, and their office was officially opened.

The opening by Garang's movement of an office in Kenya is significant. It also proves beyond a doubt the truth of recent political analyses, and the bitter reality facing the movement, convinced as it is that it is losing ground in Ethiopia as a result of the serious dialogue between the Sudanese and Ethiopian authorities.

Contacts are being activated and positive results are hoped for, since the two parties are convinced they must come to a peace agreement. Naturally, this means the movement will lose its former standing on Ethiopian territory. In addition, President Mengistu Haile Mariam's tour of the Arab states which support the Eritrean movement will definitely influence his stand on assisting the rebel movement.

Looking to Kenya's stand, we can say that what has happened had been expected; assessments differ only concerning the extent of support and aid, and of Kenya's political distance from the movement.

In the first place, Kenya is not in control of itself: It is a captive of external pressures, since it is being run by the World Council of Churches, which plays a large part in the affairs of the rebel movement. This is what prevents the Kenyans from making the correct decision regarding the diplomatic efforts of the Sudanese side. Despite Kenya's attempts to deny its aid and assistance to the movement, we find much evidence which indicates to the Sudanese authorities that Kenya persists in supporting the movement.

Recently, there has been a continuous presence of many active members of the movement, with intensified efforts through the movement's political office, which opened officially after being covered up by the Kenyans for a long time. Thus it becomes clear that Kenya has ignored all the considerations which might have restrained it: It has paid no attention to the duties of neighborliness, or to respect for charters. This means that a similar stand should be taken regarding Kenya, rising to the level of events and dealing in terms of reciprocity.

This is clear from the speech of his excellency, the prime minister, who stressed that we can fight the Kenyans in the same way as they assist the rebel movement, that is in religious or racial terms. Kenya is full of tribal diversity, and 35 percent of its population is Muslim, so they are warned against responding to empty and spurious slogans repeated by the movement. Sadiq warned against throwing stones: Your houses are glass houses, and our patience is not unlimited, he said.

Finally, we would say that wheels turn and positions change in obedience to political changes conditioned by the strategies and interests of states, particularly those states which do not rule themselves. A day will certainly come when Kenya will turn its back on John Garang.

As for John Garang, he would do better to return to the fold of his people and relatives in the motherland. The motherland can never throw him out since he is a member, an individual, and one of its sons. There are relatives who want to see him honored in his country and working among his people, working with others to put right what went wrong.

PDRY

YSP Official on Unity, Red Sea Security

JN1810160388 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 16 Oct 88 p 11

[Interview with Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah, also known as Muhsin, YSP Political Bureau member and senior official in charge of YSP external affairs, by Mahbub 'Ali in Aden; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Ali] How are the efforts toward unity between the two parts of Yemen going following Sanaa's latest summit of 4 May? What are the next measures or steps resulting from this agreement?

['Abdallah] The agreements reached at the latest summit represent an important and great step by the leaderships of the two parts in the march to achieve Yemeni unity—a noble objective for our Yemeni people throughout the homeland.

What has been achieved on this path in light of the Sanaa summit is a major national success and the greatest unity achievement accomplished so far, not because it strengthened trust between the leaderships of the two parts, but because it created bigger opportunities to reunify Yemen democratically. [passage omitted]

['Ali] PDRY's relations with Arabian Gulf states have lately witnessed tangible rapprochement. How do you explain this and what is the nature of these relations?

['Abdallah] We are really eager to establish strong relations and bonds with the region's states, in particular, and with other states in general. We have a sincere desire to develop them in the future so that they are all inclusive and we always express this desire.

In my opinion, there are no obstacles before this common desire or before its progress in the future. The state of affairs shows that we are heading in that direction and no one wants to retreat from this road because, in my opinion, it is the only road that reflects the interests, ambitions, and hopes of the people in the region. It also provides them their urgent needs for progress, prosperity, security, and stability.

In this regard, we see that there are many achievements which we feel proud of. As an example, we should mention the fraternal relations between us and the brothers in the UAE and Kuwait.

Actually, this policy is a realistic translation of our party's resolutions and conferences. These have well-defined bases, foremost of which are respect of national choices, non-intervention in domestic affairs under any pretexts, the right of each people to choose the political system they desire, and joint cooperation among states of different social systems.

With confidence, I say there is a lot in common between us and our brothers in the region, and that future prospects of establishing more fruitful cooperation among us in economic, scientific, cultural, and other fields, are broader.

['Ali] In light of this policy, how do you view the visit to be made by President Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas to Oman at the end of this month? It will be the first visit on such a level following the improvement of relations and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

['Abdallah] We hope the expected visit by Brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, [YSP] Political Bureau member and PDRY chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium, to Oman will lay strong and deep foundations for relations between the two fraternal peoples and countries.

['Ali] Your efforts and calls have recently concentrated on the security of the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. This demonstrates that you are trying to launch a Yemeni initiative through the convening of a summit for Red Sea littoral states and those of the Horn of Africa.

['Abdallah] There are attempts by some foreign powers to create tension in this region. We are interested in keeping the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa as a zone of peace and security. Therefore, our country has called, and is still calling, for consultation, coordination, and cooperation among all Red Sea littoral states to keep this area free of tension.

There are consultations conducted in order to find means of coordination with the Red Sea littoral states because the responsibility to preserve security in this region falls on them in the first place. [passage omitted]

['Ali] In light of what has been said before, do the bases for the establishment of the independent Palestinian state exist?

['Abdallah] We consider the valiant Palestinian people's uprising in the occupied territory the practical preparation to build of the bases of the modern, independent Palestinian state. We await the resolutions of the next PNC. Whatever choices it makes, the Palestinian cause will find full support and backing from us. What is decided by the Palestinian will and the PLO leadership will be supported by the PDRY. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Government 'Pleased' With Situation in Algeria

JN1810212788 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2020 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 Oct (WAKH)—The UAE has expressed satisfaction over the return of things to normal in Algeria, according to a responsible source. The source

said that the UAE is prompted by its deep belief in unified Arab destiny and its commitment to the principle of solidarity among Arab brothers. It is also prompted by its keenness on the stability of all Arab countries and its firm belief that calm dialogue between the sons of the one people, through prudence and rationalism, is the correct way to achieve the desired results and goals, and that violence leads only to loss.

In a statement carried by WAM this evening, the source added: We are pleased that the fraternal Algerian people have expressed loyalty to their wise leadership, at the top of which is President Chadli Bendjedid—known for his patience and ability to respond to all that brings good for fraternal Algeria, its stability, and the prosperity of its people, as this would consolidate the general Arab position and the higher interest of the Arab nation.

Yemen Arab Republic

Al-Iryani Sees 'No Obstacle' to Yemeni Unity

PM1810092588 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Oct 88 p 4

[Interview with Foreign Minister Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani by Khalil Matar in New York; date unspecified]

[Excerpts] [Matar] Of course, we will begin with unity.

[Al-Iryani] How nice, you always begin by talking about unity.

[Matar] Of course, because it is the concern of every Arab. Has the time not come to complete it?

[Al-Iryani] Of course, the time has come to complete it. I believe that the agreement made last May between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and YSP Secretary General Salim al-Bid required the two unity ministers to meet and lay down a schedule to present the constitution of the united state to the legislative authorities in both parts and then hold a referendum on it. When a referendum is held, the character of the two states will dissolve and a fully-integrated united state will emerge. [passage omitted]

[Matar] Have all obstacles facing unity been removed?

[Al-Iryani] The problem does not concern obstacles, because there are none. There would be an obstacle to unity if one party said no to unity. But when the two parties talk constantly about steps leading to unity, this reflects that there are no obstacles. There is always talk about steps that will eventually lead to a merger. There are no obstacles to unity.

[Matar] And to movement?

[Al-Iryani] There is no obstacle to any Yemeni citizen's movement. Any citizen can go with his identity card to the crossing point and register his name. If officials in any government department or anywhere else want to determine the identity of a person, they can look at his identity card. And if you want a Yemeni identity card, we will give you one.

[Matar] Has the [former PDRY President] 'Ali Nasir problem been resolved?

[Al-Iryani] We do not discuss individuals. We talk about a painful incident that occurred in January 1986 and had adverse effects. Regarding the northern part of Yemen, the negative aspect of that incident still persists. The best proof of this is that when Brother President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Brother Secretary General 'Ali Salim al-Bid met last Ramadan [May], they agreed to the two leaderships' continuing efforts to contain the effects of the January incidents.

What concerns us is the effects of the incident, not individuals. The effects still exist in the north. Economic, social, political, and even security burdens still exist. We hope that the brothers in the south will try to resolve this.

[Matar] What are these effects?

[Al-Iryani] They are more than just economic. There are large numbers of emigres from the party, the civil service, the military, and the security forces. We have thousands of them now residing in accommodations rented for them. We are not haggling over that. That is not what I am talking about. But it certainly constitutes a burden for us.

Second, the existence of a problem and the existence of people who feel they have been cut off from their homeland, kinfolks, and relatives, is a burden.

[Matar] How many emigres are there?

[Al-Iryani] The state is responsible for over 20,000. We are not talking about those who have joined families and relatives. After the state had looked after these people for some time they said: Thank you. We have our families and relatives. But the state is directly responsible for over 20,000 emigres. [passage omitted]

[Matar] Under Yemeni unity, will party plurality remain?

[Al-Iryani] That is a constitutional matter. The constitution of the united state, as opposed to the Constitution of the north and the Constitution of the south, does not ban the party system. The Constitution of the south stipulates that the working class under the leadership of the proletariat is the only group that has the right to assume power. [passage omitted]

[Matar] We still hear that there are some parties which are opposed to unity in the north.

[Al-Iryani] Those are your reports.

[Matar] Is there no one in the north who is opposed to unity?

[Al-Iryani] Not at all. A citizen may oppose unity in the north or in the south, but none of the officials directly or indirectly associated with decisionmaking in the north advocates separation. [passage omitted]

[Matar] The Americans tried some time ago to interfere and hamper relations between the two parts...

[Al-Iryani] That is also your information. I have not heard of it.

[Matar] When George Bush visited you, to be specific.

[Al-Iryani] Not at all. That did not happen. At that time we reiterated that we would not discuss relations between the two parts with George Bush, Shevardnadze, Roland Dumas, or Geoffrey Howe, because this is an internal matter and we will not allow anyone to discuss the question of establishing Yemeni unity or ways of achieving it. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister on Unity, Fundamentalism
PM1810151788 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Oct 88 p 4

[Interview with Interior Minister 'Abdallah Barakat by Zki Musa in Sanaa; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Musa] The question being raised is: How can you explain the fact that the Shura Council's recent elections were held peacefully despite the spread of arms among the citizens and the various tribes in the country?

[Barakat] What I would like to point out is that the Interior Ministry in no way interfered in the elections. A committee from the Constituent People's Assembly moved to the various areas and established voting points. The Interior Ministry maintained no presence until the last moment, when it moved in to maintain security only.

Actually our people are civilized: True, they have arms in their hands, but they did not use these arms. The proof of this is what you have mentioned, namely that the elections were held in a normal way, without any interference from any party. [passage omitted]

[Musa] The step taken to open the borders between the two parts of Yemen is a historic one. How do you assess the effects of that step, a few months after it was taken?

[Barakat] We took that step because we are one people and one territory. And if imperialism in the south was able to separate the north from the south and prevent people from moving to the north, now that we are liberated from tyranny and imperialism we must meet on one territory, whether in the north or the south. I believe that what we have achieved regarding the opening of borders and movement on identity cards is an important step in that direction.

First, the psychological barriers between the north and south have been eliminated. Southerners used to believed that if they tried to visit the north they would face problems. And northerners thought likewise. But this step has made it easy for the people to contact one another. [passage omitted]

[Musa] So this step has no negative aspects?

[Barakat] Certainly not. Regarding security matters, we have not yet sensed anything negative.

[Musa] When do you believe identity cards will be standardized, and how long will it take before that operation is complete?

[Barakat] We have studies and the brothers have the desire. We do not agree in this regard. But we are eager to finalize matters. When we talk about a standardized identity card, this will be proposed in light of the unified constitution and committees in order to firmly establish and deepen the idea in the minds of the people and officials. [passage omitted]

[Musa] What are the security dimensions of former President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's presence in Sanaa and the effect of this on relations with the leadership in the south?

[Barakat] The presence of 'Ali Nasir is nothing new. He has been here since 13 January 1986. All that happened was that he and his followers turned to the northern part after he lost the battle there. But his presence here does not pose any security problem. Yemeni territory is one territory. So the possibility of extraditing him from the northern part is out of the question. The brothers in the south understand this position. [passage omitted]

[Musa] What is the truth behind the growing fundamentalist trend in the country? Does this mean that some of its representatives get into the Shura Council?

[Barakat] First, we are a Muslim people. If we call ourselves the Islamic group, what will we call the others! We can say that there is an Islamic group in a Western country, not in a country whose religion has been Islamic for more than 14 centuries. The people in Yemen get upset when we make a reference to the Islamic group. They say: And what are we, then? [passage omitted]

[Musa] What about the Jewish community in Yemen: How many of them are there?

[Barakat] They do not exceed 100 people. But they are as free as other citizens. They perform their religious rites and we treat them according to the teachings of tolerant Islam. They insist on remaining here. [passage omitted]

[Musa] In the field of combating drugs, what achievements have been made in this regard, and what role does Yemen play in this field?

[Barakat] Cooperation exists and the phenomenon is virtually nonexistent in Yemen. If it exists, it is very rare. Among the 9 million Yemenis you might find one or two cases. Some greedy people, for the sake of money, try to help smugglers cross the Red Sea by small boats to other areas. We are fighting these operations.

We have been able to uncover two operations only. The smugglers' objective was to market and trade in these banned substances in Yemen. We have arrested some people, who will be tried. They will receive the just punishment they deserve. [passage omitted]

Government Agrees To Exchange POW's With Iran

JN1810183088 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Huda Tawfiq dispatch from New York]

[Text] Iraq has officially agreed to begin exchanging prisoners of war with Iran if the Iranian Government agrees to the exchange. This was officially communicated to the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] and the UN secretary general.

In a memorandum to the ICRC president, the Iraqi Government said it adopted this step for humanitarian reasons, without linking it to other issues in the UN Security Council Resolution [No 598] and without affecting implementation of the other clauses of the resolution according to the sequence of its paragraphs.

Iraq's agreement to begin the exchange of prisoners of war comes only a few days before the resumption of Gulf talks in Geneva under Perez de Cuellar at the end of this month. 'Ismat Kittani, head of the Iraqi delegation, conveyed the text of his government's memorandum to Perez de Cuellar yesterday. The memo was also conveyed to the ICRC office in Baghdad.

Observers believe that the official Iraqi agreement to begin exchanging prisoners will give a new push to the peace talks because this subject was one of the points of the secretary general's proposals to achieve a breakthrough for the resumption of the Geneva talks.

The other points call for the freedom of navigation in the high seas and in the Strait of Hormuz, withdrawal to international borders, and the clearing of Shatt al-'Arab.

The secretary general will announce the date for the resumption of the Geneva talks in the next few days. Shatt al-'Arab remains the main problem because Iraq, as the secretary general said, calls for UN supervision of the clearing operations as part of the implementation of cease-fire at sea.

For its part, Iran is ready to agree to the clearing of Shatt al-'Arab under the present valid agreements between the two countries. This is what Perez de Cuellar said to the Security Council.

Velayati had indicated that the clearing operations should take place according to the Algiers agreement which fixes borders and accounts for the clearing measures.

AL-THAWRAH Cited on Syrian-U.S. 'Conspiracy'

JN1910085088 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0645 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Oct (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that Syria is confronting the Arab awakening embodied by the Iraqi victory over the aggression and the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

In a comment today, the paper adds: Hafiz al-Asad's regime has been hatching plots against the Arab nation for many years, allying itself with dark lobbies against the Arab nation, and using false slogans.

The paper stresses that the Syrian regime's meeting with the Americans and the latter's announcement that there is harmony between the two sides' views on common issues prove the Syrian-U.S. conspiracy against Iraq and the attempt to give predominance to Iran over Iraq at the Geneva negotiations in order to undermine its pan-Arab role.

The paper says that both sides want to abort the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories by plotting against its sole and legitimate leadership, and by continuously striking at the Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that attempts to destroy Lebanon and the conspiracy against its national unity through illegal interference in its internal affairs are part of a plan by Hafiz al-Asad and the Zionist entity in Lebanon.

The paper adds that the Damascus regime is playing a serious role in the region to create appropriate circumstances to allow the Zionist entity to impose its fascist, expansionist policy on the region and to protect U.S. interests.

The paper calls on Arabs to isolate the Syrian regime and expel it from the Arab League. It also calls on Arab institutions to safeguard Arab interests.

Foreign Ministry Denies Tripartite Peace Team

TA1910010088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Foreign Ministry Spokesman Alon Li'el told our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami this morning that the Foreign Ministry has no knowledge of an Israeli-American-Egyptian team which is currently trying to advance the peace process.

There was a team dealing with the matter during Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' attendance at the UN General Assembly session, he said.

Bronfman Reports GDR Reparations Agreement

TA1810124188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The GDR has agreed to pay reparations to Jews affected by Nazi atrocities in that country. This was reported by Edgar Bronfman, the president of the World Jewish Congress, at the end of his visit to East Berlin. He claimed that it was his impression from talks with GDR leaders that a process resulting in improved relations between that country and Israel should be expected.

GDR Announcement on Ties, Reparations Awaited

TA1810180188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem is awaiting an official announcement by the GDR on the possibility that diplomatic relations with Israel will be resumed and on the GDR's willingness to negotiate the payment of reparations to Nazi victims. The Foreign Ministry has told our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami that once such an announcement arrives, it will be studied and a reaction to it will be discussed.

The Foreign Ministry states that the details available so far on the talks held in East Berlin with Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, are insufficient. In a news conference Bronfman held in East Berlin earlier, he said that the GDR has agreed to pay reparations to Jews who suffered from the Nazis.

PRC Economic Projects Continue; Official Arrives

TA1810173188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Satisfaction was expressed in Jerusalem this evening over reports from the PRC that all the joint economic projects will continue. Our political correspondent reports that a senior physician from Hadassah Hospital has received an entry visa to the PRC to advise the Chinese on obstetric matters, and a Histadrut representative was invited to participate in a conference in the PRC.

A Chinese economic delegation arrived in Israel this evening. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1705 GMT on 18 October identifies the man as "an economic figure stationed in Belgium."]

Yitzhaq Minervi, Foreign Ministry assistant director general, is continuing his talks in Beijing. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1705 GMT on 18 October reports that Minervi has completed his talks in Beijing.]

Trade Unionist Leaves for PRC

TA1810144688 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Oct 88 p 9

[Text] A second Israeli representative left for China yesterday for next week's international conference on work safety in Beijing. Shlomo Ben-Simhon, a Histadrut central committee member, will lecture the conference on Israel's work safety network.

Ben-Simhon, the head of the work safety department at the Histadrut, will also meet with Chinese trade union officials during his visit.

The other Israeli representative, Shlomo Amir from the Labour Ministry, left for China last week.

[Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 18 October in a report by Yosef Mikhalski on Page 1 adds: "Minister Moshe Shahal has said that Yosi Levi, a representative of the Energy and Infrastructure Ministry, is presently in the PRC, where he has participated in seminars and lectured on the subject of data centers."]

Economic Cooperation Pact Signed With Poland

TA1810173688 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Oct 88 p 12

[Report by Avi Gan'or]

[Text] Dan Gillerman, president of Israel's Chamber of Commerce, signed an economic cooperation agreement yesterday with his Polish counterpart, Stefan Zylkowski [name as received].

Gillerman, who arrived in Poland yesterday from Hungary, was officially invited by his Polish counterpart. According to the agreement, both chambers of commerce will cooperate in establishing a "Polish desk" in the Tel Aviv chamber of commerce, and an "Israeli desk" in Warsaw. It has also been agreed that delegations will be exchanged and joint seminars will be held in both countries to discuss business and trade opportunities.

Gillerman will stay in Poland for 5 days. He will meet the president of the Polish Central Bank.

Hungarian Official: Full Ties in 'Near Future'
TA1810155688 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Oct 88 p 4

[Report by political correspondent]

[Text] Peter Medgyessy, Hungarian deputy prime minister, yesterday told Industry and Trade Minister Ari'el Sharon, currently visiting Budapest, that Hungary will establish full diplomatic relations with Israel in the near future.

At the same time, reliable sources in Jerusalem reported after a conversation with a former Hungarian ambassador who now holds a senior position in the Hungarian Communist Party that diplomatic relations will be established this coming year.

The Hungarian deputy prime minister agreed with Sharon that the lack of political relations between Israel and Hungary during the last 21 years damaged both countries.

It has been agreed in the discussions held in Budapest that Israel would buy raw materials from socialist countries through Hungary, and that it would possibly purchase diamonds from the USSR. Medgyessy told Sharon that he intends to send a group of economic experts "to learn how Israel had managed in a very short time to set up an industrial infrastructure, to curb inflation, and to slash the state budget without damaging the economy." Sharon suggested that the delegation meet with prominent economic figures of Israel.

Direct Phone Connections With USSR Established
TA1810203188 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Beginning today it is possible to make a direct phone call to the USSR. This was announced today by Economy and Communications Minister Gad Ya'aqobi. Our correspondent 'Oded Shahar reports that the direct telephone links were achieved by the Bezeq company and the UK company, British Telecom. At this time, the direct dial system is available to six cities in the USSR, including Moscow and Leningrad.

Egyptian Proposal for Tabah Discussions Rejected
TA1710111588 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Oct 88 p 2

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Israel has rejected Egypt's proposal to hold a preliminary meeting for discussions on the implementation of the Tabah arbitration ruling. The meeting was supposed to have taken place yesterday.

A message sent by Egypt's Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem contained a suggestion for holding the meeting between the two parties in Rome, with the participation of American representatives.

According to the suggestion, the meeting would have taken place yesterday. Israel, however, notified 'Abd al-Majid that the political level had not had sufficient time to deal with the arbitration ruling in depth. The timing for holding the meeting is, therefore, unsuitable for Israel.

This week as well, the Cabinet will not discuss the Egyptian proposal in an attempt to postpone the talks until after the elections. Although the United States supports this move, it is estimated in Jerusalem that the Egyptians will react unfavorably to Israel's refusing to hold the preliminary meeting.

Egypt Agrees To Postpone Talks
TA1710145488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Text] Egypt has postponed for 60 days the start of the discussions on implementing the Tabah arbitration ruling. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the announcement was sent simultaneously to Egypt's ambassador in Israel and Israel's ambassador in Egypt.

In doing this, Egypt has agreed to the U.S. request not to involve Tabah in the Israeli election campaign. The discussion on implementing the Tabah ruling will therefore begin in late November or early December.

Shamir Terms Peres-Rabin Plan 'Election Gimmick'
TA1810155888 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has described Shim'on Peres and Yitzhaq Rabin's plan for the territories as an election gimmick. He claimed it is not a plan and that whatever it is, no one will remember it a mere 2 weeks after the Knesset elections.

Speaking to members of the Foreign Press Association, the prime minister said that the Camp David accords stipulate that an administrative council for autonomy, which will represent the Palestinians in negotiations over the final arrangement, should first be elected. He claims that only the Camp David agreements and the interim arrangement for autonomy included in them constitute the plan binding on Israel insofar as the territories are concerned.

The prime minister reiterated that if the residents of the territories launch an armed struggle, all those who participate in it will pay a heavy price, and none will survive.

Supreme Court Clears PLP for Knesset Elections

TA1810134688 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The Supreme Court has turned down the appeal on the Central Elections Committee's decision not to disqualify the Progressive List for Peace [PLP]. The party will therefore run in the elections.

Our correspondent 'Adi Malul reports that the court passed its ruling by a majority vote of three to two. The dissenting opinion was cast by Menahem Eylon, deputy president of the court; and by Justice Dov Levin. The court will publish its reasoning at a later date.

Peres Comments on Court Decisions on PLP, Kakh

TA1810181988 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1730 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres today said that he is pleased with the court decision not to let the Kakh movement run for the Knesset. Touring Qiryat Shemona, Peres told our correspondent Menahem Horowitz that there is no room in the Knesset for racists.

He also said that there is no difference between HADASH [the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] and the PLP [the Progressive List for Peace], although the PLP gets its orders from Tunisia, while HADASH follows instructions from Moscow.

AL-FAJR on 'Significance' of Palestinian State

TA1810155488 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 16 Oct 88 p 4

[Editorial: "A Decision To Support"]

[Text] The Palestinian leadership confirmed this week that the Palestine National Council will convene in the very near future to declare a Palestinian state according to the 1947 United Nations partition plan.

The significance of such a decision is multifold. First, the PNC finally will meet in order to translate into words the deeds of more than 10 months of protests in the occupied territories. This meeting was given added importance when the leadership announced that it is submitting for ratification a proposal to declare a state. Such a step is bound to give the more than five million Palestinians scattered all over the world a feeling of security and a sense of belonging which they have lacked for four decades.

Second, the announcement came as the PLO was under pressure to remain merely reactive to international developments rather than proactive. In other words, the Palestinian people had been asked not to bother writing their own history but to let others write it for them.

Several governments asked the PLO not to act until after the Israeli and American elections scheduled for November. These governments are worried that whatever step the PLO may take might have a dramatic negative impact on these two important actors in the Middle East crisis.

The Palestinian leadership wisely announced that the future of the Palestinian people cannot be determined by either the U.S. or Israel, but by the Palestinians themselves, and that regardless of the outcome of their elections, no significant change in their contributions to a just, peaceful settlement is expected.

Third, declaring a state according to the 1947 partition plan gives the Palestinians room to negotiate for the boundaries of the new state. The partition plan was accepted by the major members of the United Nations when it was passed on November 29, 1947.

The United States and Israel are still bound by that plan as the internationally recognized declaration of the creation of a Palestinian and a Jewish state. For them to go against it indicates their disrespect for a resolution for which they both fought hard and which they hailed when it was passed. Their argument for persuading the PLO to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 then will be tarnished.

The Palestinian declaration of statehood should be seen as a positive and healthy development in the direction of a permanent settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It shows Palestinian maturity and enthusiasm to contribute to peace. World governments ought to capitalize on this Palestinian step and give it the encouragement it needs to produce the desired outcome; which is peace, security and prosperity for all the people of this region and those linked to them.

Arab Leaders Skeptical of Alignment Proposals

TA1810144388 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Oct 88 pp 1, 10

[Report by political correspondent Mikhal Yudelman]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Palestinians in the territories were mostly sceptical about the proposals by Shim'on Peres and Yitzhaq Rabin, saying they would be inadequate to produce a lull in the uprising. The proposals failed to answer Palestinian demands for municipal elections, but sought instead to produce local negotiators as an alternative to the PLO, the Palestinians said.

"It's too little, too late," said AL-FAJR editor Hanna Sinyurah, who was proposed in 1985 as a Palestinian peace negotiator. Rabin's offer of elections was positive, but he still had to free himself of the "Jordanian option," and accept the "Palestinian option" and Palestinian rights to self-determination, Sinyurah said.

Deposed Hebron mayor Mustafa al-Natshah said the proposals showed an evolution in Labour's thinking, but they "only cover issues of our daily life, and don't deal with our political future. The people are involved in the uprising to get recognition of their national rights," he said.

Gaza lawyer Fayis Abu Rahmah, suggested as a negotiator with Sinyurah, said the Labour proposals skirted the main issue: achieving a settlement through an international conference.

Ibrahim Daqqaq, head of the Arab Thought Forum, a Palestinian think-tank, said: "If Rabin is looking for negotiators, he knows the address. For 20 years the Palestinians have been saying that the PLO is their representative. His statement is for internal consumption, and for his own expediency."

Bi'r Zayt University professor Sari Nusaybah said Rabin's proposals were unlikely to produce calm. "If such a cease-fire is at all possible, it is doubtful that it will come in response to something like electing a negotiating team."

Radwan Abu 'Ayyash, head of the Arab Journalists Association, was more optimistic. Rabin's statements, he said, were "encouraging...the first time that he is stating publicly that it is a political problem that cannot be solved with guns. The minute Rabin and Labour prove that they are sincere in their efforts to find a real political solution, the Palestinians will react positively."

AL-QUDS Comments on Peres Election Program

TA1810172688 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 17 Oct 88 p 1

[Editorial: "The Empty Circle"]

[Text] Shim'on Peres, leader of the Israeli Labor Party, has said that the first thing he will do if he wins the 1 November elections will be to call for the convocation of an international conference to pave the way for direct Arab-Israeli negotiations. Peres affirmed his persistence in the old Jordanian-Palestinian option. According to him, "this is the only realistic solution because one cannot divide the Palestinian people on both banks of the Jordan River."

These remarks by Peres cannot be separated from the feverish election campaign between the Likud and Labor. They constitute no more than a search in "old books" and an attempt to resurrect the dead, because the Jordanian-Palestinian option which Peres has raised during the past months is finished in word and deed following King Husayn's decision to sever legal and administrative links with the West Bank.

Peres' insistence on adhering to this option proves that the leader of the Labor Party is unable to formulate a clear policy that would actually lead to the achievement of a "historic settlement" about which he has often talked. It also proves that he is still running around the same empty circle and is evading the only realistic decision, the acceptance of the Palestinian option.

It is noteworthy that polls on the possible results of the Knesset elections indicate that the two large parties are about even. This means that Peres will be unable to form the next Israeli government and that the Israeli political situation will remain as it has been during the past 4 years, dominated by the "government of the two heads."

HA'ARETZ 'Regrets' Report of Alignment 'Spies'

TA1710123888 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Oct 88 p 3

[Text] Following the publications in HA'ARETZ, ex-Shin Bet men Re'uven Hazaq, Rafi Malka, and Peleg Raday vehemently denied the reports alleging that they had been "spies" on behalf of the Alignment. HA'ARETZ, therefore, saw fit to re-examine the issue.

Malka and Raday supply data security consultation services to the Alignment's headquarters. Re'uven Hazaq runs Teddy Kollek's [Jerusalem mayor] election campaign.

The conclusion reached by HA'ARETZ following the re-examination of the affair was that the source, who indicated a connection between the trio's professional capabilities and the fact that the Alignment occasionally has prior information on its adversary's moves, was perhaps jumping to conclusions.

HA'ARETZ and its reporter acted without intent of malice, relying on the source's information because of his status and position.

HA'ARETZ regrets the offense caused Hazaq, Malka, and Raday.

Ethiopian Official Denies Maintaining Contacts

TA1810180688 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A senior Ethiopian Foreign Ministry official has denied reports that his country is maintaining contacts with Israel. The denial comes in reaction to remarks made by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir earlier this week that Israel maintains contacts with Ethiopia on the subject of resuming Jewish emigration.

Arab Charged With Espionage, Attempted Arson

TA1810133888 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Muhammad Masarwa, from the village of Baqa al-Gharbiyya, has been detained until the completion of all legal proceedings against him. Our correspondent Pe'erli Shahar reports that Masarwa is charged with

espionage, illegally possessing and carrying a weapon, and attempted arson. The Tel Aviv District Court today authorized the publication of the detention.

3 Ramla Arabs Charged With Belonging to Force 17

TA1810164288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The Tel Aviv District Court has ordered that three Arab residents of Ramla remain in detention until the end of legal proceedings against them. They are charged with joining the Force-17 terror organization and planning to cause injury and harm the country's security. One of them is also accused of murdering a drug addict from Ramla to trade the body for terrorists locked up in Israel.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

U.S. Journalist Hurt in Nabulus

TA1810153288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A 17-year-old youth was killed in Nabulus this afternoon and four others were injured. All of them were hit by IDF gunfire during a riot. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the soldiers were attacked with rocks and bottles.

Also among the casualties is a U.S. journalist [identified as Neil Cassidy of FRONTLINE magazine]. He claims he was standing behind a group of young boys and sustained slight leg injuries from a plastic bullet.

Further on Nabulus Casualties

TA1810200188 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A 5-year-old boy and a 17-year-old youth were killed today during a violent clash with IDF soldiers in the Nabulus casbah. Two other local residents and an American press photographer were wounded in the incident.

Our correspondent Victor Nahmias reports that according to military sources the incident started when an Arab youth tried to force shop owners to close their shops during the visit of the defense minister. IDF soldiers intervened and were attacked by stones and bottles. The soldiers shot back.

The IDF is investigating the circumstances of the presence of the U.S. photographer among the rioters in the casbah, since it has been declared a closed military zone.

Girl Injured by Stone in Lod

TA1810154388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A 13-year-old girl from Lod sustained head injuries from a stone thrown at her by local Arabs. Our correspondent reports that several girls were walking toward Habad school in Lod when they were attacked with a hail of stones.

A brawl ensued between the schoolgirls and Arab boys, who were subsequently reinforced when Arab adults later joined them. The police were rushed to the area and detained seven Arabs, including six women. They will face summary trials on assault and battery charges.

Several 'Clashes' in Gaza

TA1810181288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A 17-year-old Gaza youth was slightly injured by IDF gunfire. Military sources have reported that he had incited students to launch a demonstration in town. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that there were several clashes with the security forces in the Gaza District today and that Arab sources have reported casualties.

Update on 17 Oct Incidents

TA1810175688 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 18 Oct 88 p 1

[Excerpts] There were only a few incidents in the West Bank yesterday. In the Gaza Strip, on the other hand, 11 youths and children were wounded in clashes with IDF units. [passage omitted]

A youth was wounded in a demonstration staged in Nabulus. The IDF conducted a series of operations in several villages in Samaria. In East Jerusalem, Mutawakkil Taha, chairman of the Arab Writers Association; and 'Abd al-Karim Abu 'Arqub, an AL-SHA'B correspondent, were detained. Both had recently been released from administrative detention.

IDF units yesterday raided several villages, tore down roadblocks, erased slogans, and took down PLO flags. The villages were Kafr Thulth and Jaba' (Janin District), Habala (Qalqilyah District), and 'Azmut (Nabulus District). In Janin, unidentified persons burned up the car of the mayor who also serves as the Interior Ministry director for the Civilian Administration.

In the Fahma refugee camp a man suspected of collaboration with the authorities was severely beaten. In Qalqilyah, stones were thrown at an Israeli car.

The IDF last night lifted the curfew imposed on the village of Burqa', north of Nabulus. Curfews continue in the village of Zawiya and the small Al-Ghazzah refugee camp near Bethlehem.

Rubber Bullets Fired in Shu'fat

TA1810211488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2100 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A police patrol came across a group of youths who were blocking a road in the Shu'fat refugee camp in East Jerusalem. Our correspondent Yosi Qoren reports that the policemen fired rubber bullets at the youths, hitting one of them. At this hour all is quiet in the area.

Curfews Imposed in Gaza Strip

TA1910020788 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] The military government in the Gaza Strip this morning imposed curfews on nine refugee camps and villages to prevent disturbances. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that a strike is expected in the territories today in protest against what the residents call attacks on the Arabs by Jewish settlers. A youth was shot and wounded by the IDF in the Al-Nusayrat refugee camp yesterday.

Drug Seizures, Deaths, Arrests Reported

TA1710140888 [Editorial Report]

Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 17 October in an 80-word report states that according to Dr Yo'av Santo, head of the Health Ministry's department dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, there are apparently some 60,000 drug addicts in Israel but only 20,000 have been reported to the Health Ministry. Dr Santo went on to say that 10- to 12-year-old children use hashish and serve as messengers for hashish dealers.

The report also states that this is an increase in drug abuse of some 30 percent in each of the past 4 years and that about 70 people died of drug abuse in 1987.

Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 17 October in a 300-word report by Eddy Gal on page 9 states that "Yosef Snir (40), of the infamous Snir family from Yafo, is suspected of heading a drug network which attempted to smuggle 9 kg of Persian cocaine and 1.5 tons of hashish. The hashish was destined for Gaza markets while the cocaine was to be sold in Yafo. Snir was caught driving a pickup truck loaded with the hashish. Last weekend his detention was extended by 12 days.

"Two weeks ago, after the police learned that a large-scale drug deal was under way, it set up roadblocks in the Galilee area. During a search of one of the cars, some 9 kg of Persian cocaine, worth some $4 million, was found. In their investigation, the two men who were in the car said that Snir was the head of the drug network, and that a large hashish shipment was due.

"Galilee District police, however, denied that the two cases are related and that Snir was involved in the cocaine shipment."

Trade Estimated at $2 Billion

TA1810184988 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 18 Oct 88 p 14

[Summary] In a seminar on drug abuse held yesterday in Haifa, it was stated that "despite the efforts to fight drug abuse, the phenomenon is spreading. Today some 30,000 people use drugs on a regular basis and some 200,000 people of all social strata take drugs occasionally. The drug trade is estimated at $2 billion."

It was also said that among those using drugs there are "some children 9 to 10 years old, while it is known that there are 14- to 15-year-old drug addicts." It was also stated that the various organizations dealing with the drug problem cannot catch up with the expanding drug abuse, and all together "have a very limited annual budget of some 5 million Israeli shekels."

Household Income Increases 13 Percent

TA1810144888 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Oct 88 p 9

[Report by David Rosenberg]

[Excerpts] Thanks to lower income taxes, the average household had 13 percent more take-home pay last year than in 1985—nearly double the increase in the average pre-tax wage—a survey released yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS] showed.

The average pre-tax salary rose, after accounting for inflation, just 7 percent to NIS [new Israeli shekels] 2,375 in 1987, while the average net wage grew 13 percent to NIS 1,870. Taxes and National Insurance Institute payments took up only 21 percent of the average wage earner's pay, the bureau said.

With the average household containing 3.8 people, the available monthly income per person last year was NIS 486. [passage omitted]

The survey measured households where its head is a wage earner and accounts for at least two-thirds of the household's total income. On average, about 9 percent of the typical household's income came from nonwage sources, such as pensions and investments.

Army Chief Leaves for Ankara 16 Oct

JN1610172988 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Text] Staff Field Marshal al-Sharif Zayd ibn Shakir, commander in chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces, left Amman today for Anakara at the head of a military delegation on an official visit of several days to Turkey. During the visit, he will meet several senior Turkish officials and visit a number of military sites and institutes.

He was seen off by chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Talib, his aides, the Royal Air Force commander, the Turkish ambassador in Amman, and the Turkish military attache in Amman.

Paper Reports Military Arms Deal With Turkey

JN1810170188 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Oct 88 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that Jordan will strike a military arms deal with Turkey under easy terms. The general format was agreed upon during Jordanian monarch King Husayn's visit to Ankara earlier this year.

AL-ITTIHAD learned that the current visit of a Jordanian military delegation headed by Staff Field Marshal Zayd ibn Shakir, Jordanian Army commander, to Turkey will be concluded with the signing of this deal.

The deal includes F-16 bombers and interceptors produced by Turkey with the help of the United States since it is a NATO country, and other developed military equipment produced by Turkish military factories.

Trade Minister on USSR Ties, Arab Investment

JN1710152188 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 14 Oct 88

[Excerpts] Jordan will sign a cooperation agreement with the USSR soon to open new markets for Jordanian goods, import Soviet products, and benefit from Sovet expertise in numerous spheres, Jordan's Industry and Trade Minister Hamdi al-Tabba'says.

In an exclusive interview with AL-ITTIHAD, he said the agreement is in line with Jordan's distinctive relations with various countries around the world. Jordan and the EC have a similar agreement, whereby any Jordanian can export to the community member states, he noted, adding that the move should open up new horizons to Jordanian and Arab investors.

Al-Tabba' noted Jordan's political and economic stability, which favors investment in the country. The recent economic measures adopted by the Jordanian Government are a translation of its espousal of a free market economy accessible to all the Arab brothers and various countries, particulary friendly ones. [passage omitted]

Al-Tabba' said Jordan's investment act allows Arabs to invest on the same footing as Jordanians. Acquisitions are open to Arabs indiscriminately in the sectors of transport, tourism, industry, and agriculture.

Arabs are allowed to begin projects entirely on their own. To promote this, we started a center to serve Arab as well as Jordanian potential investors, the minister pointed out. It will serve as a vehicle whereby Jordanians may pursue registration procedures on behalf of would-be Arab investors with the proviso that startup is no later than 1 month after an application is filed. Run by a group of Jordanian experts and specialists available to offer free advice, the center is a boon to Arab investors, Al-Tabba' said. [passage omitted]

The minister invited would-be Arab investors to visit Jordan to explore for themselves investment possibilities in the country. He pointed out that Jordanian Embassies in Arab and friendly countries have commercial attaches to provide advice and assistance to potential investors. Also, there are commercial centers in some of these countries that offer the same kind of service, Al-Tabba' said.

Trade Minister Leaves for Cairo 17 Oct

JN1810071888 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Excerpt] Industry and Trade Minister Hamdi al-Tabba' left Amman for Cairo this evening at the head of an official delegation on a 5-day visit to Egypt. The visit takes place at the invitation of Dr Maurice Makramallah, Egyptian minister of state for international cooperation.

During the visit, Al-Tabba' will meet with Egyptian Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and will hold talks with several Egyptian officials.[passage omitted]

Prince Hasan Returns From UK Visit 15 Oct

JN1510180488 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 15 Oct 88

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan and Her Royal Highness Princess Tharwat returned to Amman this afternoon at the end of a visit to the UK. Their royal highnesses were welcomed upon their return home by His Royal Highness Prince Rashid ibn Al-Hasan, the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, the court minister, the private chamberlain of his majesty the king, the minister of higher education, and other high-ranking officials.

Reportage on Central Bank Measures, Dinar Decline

Bank To Unify Exchange Rates

JN1510085488 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 15 Oct 88 p 5

[By Salamah B. Ni'matt]

[Text] Amman—The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) is expected to announce further measures today to liberalise the foreign exchange market and eliminate a wide gap

between the Jordan dinar's official exchange rate and that of the free market, bankers told the JORDAN TIMES.

They said that during a meeting Thursday, Central Bank officials told them that the decision, to be made public and effective Saturday, would unify the exchange rates and give leeway for market forces to determine the dinar's value in the domestic market.

A senior CBJ official told the JORDAN TIMES Thursday the new measures did not constitute a complete flotation of the exchange rate and that a detailed and more accurate announcement would be made public today. He would not elaborate.

Since May this year, the dinar lost 12 per cent of its value against the U.S. dollar at official rates and slipped even further against other major currencies. The new move, if implemented, would close a 10 per cent gap between the official rate and the free rate.

A banker, who asked not to be named, said the elimination of the gap between the two rates is hoped to reduce the drain on the official reserve of foreign currencies and ease pressure on the dinar by curbing a run on foreign currencies for "illegitimate and speculation purposes."

He said the new decision leaves the door open for the Central Bank to intervene in the open market to adjust any imbalances that may occasionally occur. He said the bank would release a daily report to serve as a guide to the market for letters of credit and transfer rates. Bankers noted that such a step would increase the cost on importers and encourage exports, thus raising prices of imported goods.

Last month, the CBJ floated interest rates and commissions in a move aimed at helping the dinar, boosting exports and curbing consumption. It freed interest rates on all deposits, fixed the lending rate at nine per cent, but effectively floated the rate by allowing banks to charge commission at their discretion. It also raised its rediscount rate to seven per cent from 5.75, where it had stood since Nov. 1986. The measure was designed to squeeze the money supply, limit capital outflow and enhance exports.

CBJ Deputy Governor Mahir Shukri said recently the economy was in need of "deep structural changes" and that the government was ready to introduce them.

Commenting on the series of monetary measures taken by the government to stabilise the local market and support the dinar, a leading banker, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said most of the measures came "either a little bit or very much late." He said that the decision to float interest rates and commissions was "overdue," and that floating the dinar's exchange rate "should have been done before pressure started under the present economic condtions.

"It is rather late to expect too much recovery from these measures on the short term," he told the JORDAN TIMES. "It takes very little to make people lose confidence but it takes a very long time to restore it once it has been damaged. It is a basic economic rule."

The banker stressed that "no doubt, the new policies should have a positive long term effect," but, he added, "we must not expect immediate solutions."

He pointed out that the national economy is in need of a radical shift in policy to reflect the reality of the economic, financial and monetary situation and to avoid "the apparently spontaneous and impulsive decisions that do not enhance confidence."

The prominent banker said that "had these same measures taken recently been taken a few months earlier, they would have had an excellent effect." Asked what were his predictions for the economy, he said that imports would have to be squeezed as well as government spending. He said he did not consider a devaluation of the dinar as "a problem that anyone should panic about. In fact," he added, "it could be a healthy thing."

New Currency Measures Adopted

JN1510091888 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
15 Oct 88 p 1

[Text] Amman—PETRA—A meeting comprising directors of commercial banks and financial companies was held at the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] to discuss amendments introduced by the CBJ on foreign currency control instructions. The amendments are aimed at developing the kingdom's gains of foreign currencies, making citizens dealings in these currencies more flexible, and satisfying citizens' legitimate needs of them. The instructions included the following:

1. Developing the CBJ's foreign currency pricing policy in order to create balance between Jordan's revenues of foreign currencies and the needs of the various economic activities for these currencies. This, however, should maintain the stability of dealings between banks and their customers, which would unify the rate of foreign currencies in the Kingdom.

Under these instructions, the CBJ will interfere in the market every now and then to create balance in the exchange rate of foreign currencies in line with the goals of the economic, monetary, and financial policies.

2. Giving more freedom to deal in foreign currencies so that citizens are allowed to replenish their foreign currency accounts with foreign banknotes as long as the accounts are deposits for at least 6 months. These deposits may be breached before the term expires if the money is to be transferred into Jordanian dinars.

3. Payment for goods imported to the free zones can be made in foreign banknotes.

4. The repatriated earnings from national exports can be settled in foreign currency banknotes, and exporters can keep an equivalent of 50 percent of their export earnings in banks and financial institutions so that it can be used to cover their needs of foreign currencies to finance the import of raw materials needed for export operations. This is to encourage national exports.

5. Removing the administrative obstacles to the transfer of the interest on Arab and foreign capital invested in Jordan.

The CBJ governor informed the attendants about the government's inclinations so far as coordination between the economic, financial, and monetary policies is concerned. He also stressed the need for commercial banks and financial institutions to abide by these instructions when they deal with their customers in order to achieve the desired goals; namely, maintaining the Kingdom's gains of foreign currencies and rationalizing their use.

Chamber of Commerce on Proposals

JN1810193488 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Because of new economic changes and its desire to bear its responsibility, the Amman Chamber of Commerce called on the various trade sectors and unions to hold a meeting to study the results and effects of the economic, monetary, and financial measures taken by the government recently to deal with the current economic situation.

The meeting was attended by a large number of businessmen, traders, and representatives of the trade sectors. The discussions were characterized by a sense of responsibility, affiliation, and understanding for the economic circumstances Jordan is going through at the moment which made the meeting positive and beneficial.

Some proposals were agreed on which will be referred to the officials to study them and make the appropriate decisions.

Businessmen on 'Positive Aspects'

JN1810210188 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 oct 88

[Text] Amman—Representatives of the financial, industrial, and trade sectors praised the government's recent economic, financial, and monetary measures to strengthen the national economy, preserve its growth, and adapt to the general recession which has hit the whole area.

They also welcomed the comprehensive economic program of the government to preserve the prices of some basic goods and foodstuffs for the citizens, control government expenditure, limit importation, maintain a flexible exchange rate for the Jordanian dinar [JD], and observe expenditures in non-productive fields. They affirmed the positive aspects of the JD's decline, which by far exceed the negative aspects.

The representatives of the economic functionaries affirmed the importance of national effort which the citizens must exert to maintain the strength of the Jordanian economy. They explained that the government measures aim in principle to ensure a replenishment of Jordan's hard currency revenues to save on the imports of the private and public sectors from abroad and cover the legitimate needs of the citizens including education, health, and tourism.

Chairman on Measures

JN1810211288 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1841 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Interview with Muhammad 'Asfur, chairman of the Union of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce and of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, by Mahmud Muharib; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Muharib] What are the Jordanian businessmen's reactions to the government's recent economic measures?

['Asfur] In response to the recent economic developments and out of a desire to share responsibility, the Amman Chamber of Commerce addressed an invitation to the various commercial sectors and trade unions to attend a meeting to study the results or effects of the economic, financial, and monetary measures recently taken by the government to tackle the current economic conditions.

The meeting was attended by a large number of businessmen, merchants, and representatives of the commercial sectors. The discussions were characterized by a sense of responsibility and belonging and an understanding of the economic circumstances experienced by Jordan, which has made the meeting positive and useful. The conferees reached a number of recommendations which will be submitted to the officials to study and to adopt suitable decisions on them.

Regarding the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar [JD]—the main topic of the discussion—it is understood that the value of the currency of any country stems from the productive capabilities of that country represented by the available economic resources and the method of their utilization.

We in Jordan possess considerable productive capabilities whether in terms of a developed infrastructure, highly qualified manpower, or certain natural resources, in addition to the ambitiousness, sense of belonging, and efficiency of the Jordanian citizen as well as the security and stability enjoyed by this country thanks to its wise leadership.

Therefore, we believe that the JD stands on strong pillars and that the changes which have taken place recently are only temporary, dictated by various developments which have had an effect on the economy in the form of constant pressure on the JD. In such circumstances, it becomes the duty of all citizens in all sectors to cooperate and support one another in order to overcome the difficulties, which we hope would be temporary.

I believe that the exchange rate of the JD will take its normal place against the foreign currencies, which would result in the disappearance of the fluctuations in the exchange rates in the local market. This is expected to make Jordanian exports competitive in the world market, reduce imports, and improve the balance of trade.

At the same time, we must not overlook some of the negative effects resulting from the decisions such as the increase in the prices of certain commodities and imported services, which could lead to the emergence of tangible inflation and the reluctance to invest in productive projects.

It is worth pointing out here that the government's decision to fix the prices of basic foodstuffs and to reduce the prices of water and electricity will lessen the effects of the expected inflation. We also hope that the government will be more patient and consider the issues that might directly result from these decisions, such as contracts previously concluded between the public sector and contractors from the private sector.

Despite all that, we feel that it would be possible to overcome these difficulties by enlightening the citizens about their responsibilities toward their country and the need for every one of us to assume his share of the required efforts and sacrifices in order to overcome these temporary circumstances. Thank you.

Bank Official on Dinar Rate

JN1910094588 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Oct 88 pp 1, 16

[Text] Amman—Dr Mahir Shukri, Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] deputy governor, has asserted that the rate of exchange of the Jordanian dinar against foreign currencies, particularly the dollar, will stablize within the next 3 weeks at maximum, when the market itself will cancel the difference between the official rate, fixed by the CBJ, and the market rate.

In statements to SAWT AL-SHA'B, he said that as a result of the measures taken by the CBJ, the merchant banks were left to depend on themselves to provide their needs of foreign currencies. Therefore, the CBJ has allowed the Jordanian dinar to drop to the limits it reached in order to help the market balance itself. He explained that the signs that emerged during the past 3 days indicate that the market witnessed a new, good supply of foreign currencies, while it only witnessed demand on them in the past.

He said: This phenomenon represents the beginning of the return of things to normal. It is expected that supply will increase gradually until this leads to the rate of balance, which is expected to be realistic and not as the speculators had expected. Dr Shukri expressed his conviction that any person who bought the dollar for 450 fils will undoubtedly lose.

Dr Shukri said that what the exchange market has witnessed recently was not mere speculation, but a gamble, made by citizens, not moneychangers, in order to make a quick profit. Surprisingly, many citizens, even housewives, have joined this gamble. Regrettably, small gamblers are the biggest losers because they enter the market late and buy at high rates and leave the market late and sell at low rates. Professional gamblers know when to enter [the market] and when to leave,.

Dr Shukri announced that the CBJ is currently conducting a study to establish a corporation to guarantee Jordanian exports in order to remove any non-trade risks for the Jordanian exporter. The study is expected to conclude before the end of the current year and is expected to play a major role in the exports field, especially since the government is working to establish a fund to support national exports.

Answering a question, the CBJ deputy governor said that Jordan's decision to disengage relations with the occupied West Bank will not include the Jordanian banks' branches in the West Bank. He said that the East and West banks constitute one economy, but as for the disengagement decisions, they were made for purely political reasons.

He added that the Amman-Cairo Bank has opened a new branch in the occupied town of Janin after the announcement of the disengagement decision. The CBJ is still dealing with these branches as branches of any Jordanian bank inside Jordan. He said that citizens in the West Bank are still dealing in the Jordanian dinar as the principal currency.

Dailies on Dinar Decline, Central Bank Measures

AL-RA'Y on 'Fraud Abroad'

JN1510134088 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 15 Oct 88 pp 24, 28

[Fahd al-Fanik "Highlights" column: "Why Did the Dollar Rate Rise in the Moneychangers' Market?"]

[Text] Now that the fire in the money exchange market has been put out, and the rate of the dollar has returned to normal since Wednesday afternoon, it has become possible to write about the Monday and Tuesday phenomenon, without fear of unhealthy reactions.

No one denies the existence of economic difficulties in Jordan due to the decrease in financial assistance, loans, and transfers and the continuation of a high level of public spending. This has been demanding an integral program for reconstruction and restructuring in light of the new developments.

However, the basics of Jordan's economy is something, and the 10 percent decline of the dinar's rate against the dollar in 1 or 2 days is something else. Nothing new occurred on Monday or Tuesday to justify this bizarre move. What, then, happened?

Everybody, including officials, has the right to know and the duty to act. A major Jordanian bank bought all dollars available in the Jordanian market. The bank (or its exchange unit) retained all the banknotes without selling any of them, thus preventing the circulation of the currency in the exchange market and hysterically increasing its rate. When the matter was disclosed and some voices were raised, this organized process stopped (temporarily), and the rate dropped to the level of 41-42 piasters.

Unveiling what happened is not enough, because it is not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a wide-scale plan some of which is executed in Amman's financial market time and again, and some of which is executed in the moneychangers market, where some people have been lured into speculations and fraud abroad.

What is required now is not only to stop these intentional plans and strike at those who implement them, but to go further. We are interested in knowing where millions of dollars in banknotes collected from the market by the exchange unit have gone, especially since this unit considers itself above the law and buys foreign checks contrary to the decision of the economic security committee, as shown by examples in our possession.

Once again, we do not deny economic difficulties, nor do we underestimate the need for formulating solutions and desired measures concerning the basics of the Jordanian economy. However, we believe that what happened last week is not the business of only the banking and monetary policies, but also that of the security and law-enforcement organs, who are assigned the task of protecting the security of the country and disclosing what happens in the dark, not only against the dinar, but also against the entity of the country and the people.

SAWT AL-SHA'B on Measures

JN1510093688 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 15 Oct 88 p 1

[Editorial: "The New Monetary Measures"]

[Text] The recent measures by the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] to treat the consequences of the existence of more than one price for foreign currencies in the monetary market will create balance between the Kingdom's assets of foreign currency and the need of the economic sector for these currencies.

The decisions will help maintain these goals through the CBJ's interference in the market every now and then and when needed to affect the exchange rate of foreign currencies in a way that does not contradict the goals of the general economic policies. These monetary decisions facilitate exports and help increase the Kingdom's reserves of foreign currency. They will also activate and develop national industry and provide additional work opportunities. The new measures will curb speculation in currencies and attempts to smuggle them. They will eliminate differences in rate of exchange.

These important decisions would also give more freedom to individuals as far as depositing, withdrawing, selling, and buying foreign currency is concerned. This would satisfy individuals' legitimate needs in a way that secures citizens' assurance, protects and develops the Kingdom's gains of foreign currency, and achieves monetary and economic stability. The new CBJ amendments are characterized by necessary flexibility to remove all routine obstacles before the flow of further Arab and international investment into Jordan.

AL-DUSTUR Praises Measures

JN1610150388 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Oct 88 pp 22, 19

["The Weekly Economic Analysis" by Muhammad Amin: "The Central Bank Measures Are a Positive Step Along the Road"]

[Text] The measures the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] has adopted to develop its foreign currency pricing policy came as one of the proposed solutions to eliminate specualtion in foreign currency, stabilize and unify exchange rates, and both promote and preserve Jordan's foreign currency revenues.

It is believed that the market will shortly adapt itself to the new situation and that foreign currency prices will settle according to world prices against the Jordanian dinar.

The recent measures will certainly not end speculation in one stroke because speculation may at the beginning continue on a small scale until matters settle down and the gap between the CBJ daily price rates and those of the moneychangers is narrowed. This is what the CBJ is expecting to achieve in the near future.

The CBJ will also not leave matters in the foreign currency market without occasional surveillance and control to balance prices in a manner harmonious with the aims of economic, financial, and monetary policy. Upon viewing the possible effects of these measures on the trade balance in the long run, we find that imports should be rationalized. This will automatically happen

because the rise in the cost of imports—an expected result of these measures—will reflect on the imported goods whose prices will go up. The people will then desist from buying imported goods, except essential ones, and importers will therefore import less.

The financial measures will also work side by side with previous government measures to encourage an increase in Jordanian exports, thus narrowing the gap between the volume of imports and exports and reducing the trade deficit.

Another important CBJ measure is to allow the people to replenish their foreign currency accounts with foreign banknotes in the form of time deposits of not less than 6 months. This will allow those who keep foreign currencies in their homes to take their money to banks. Thus people will think less about using that money for speculation because someone collecting bank interest will certainly not look for unguaranteed, quick, speculative profit.

We hope that the market will quickly respond to the CBJ measures and that exchange rate differences between the official banking system and the unofficial market will disppear so that the hoped for aims will be attained.

AL-RA'Y on Monetary Strategy

JN1610092088 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Oct 88 p 22

[Fahd al-Fanik "Highlights" column: "New Monetary Measures: Flexibility or Flotation"]

[Text] I do not know whether the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) will henceforth consider the method of fixing the Jordanian dinar exchange rate flotation, but I tend to believe that what is meant is flexibility rather than flotation.

For one reason or another, we understand flotation as every vendor setting the price he wishes. This, however, is not right. Within one market, all prices are the same to everyone. All there is to it is that this price is not stable, but changes from time time. However, when it does change, this change should apply to all dealers.

In the absence of an organized money market as a mechanism which allows the exchange rate to be fixed of its own accord without the intervention of the CBJ, the latter will set a daily price to which all have to adhere to for one day depending on the estimates of supply and demand as reflected by six leading banks.

Some of the factors achieved by flotation are that the Jordanian dinar is no more dependant on the Special Drawing Rights cartel or any other cartel or specific foreign currency. This factor is not new. The dinar has practically been separated from the Special Drawing Rights since 1986. The gap between the disregarded official exchange rate and the rate used by the CBJ gradually became larger until it reached around 20 percent.

The CBJ says the price of the dinar will henceforth be fixed in a way that will provide a balance between the Kingdom's foreign currency revenues and its needs, where the current needs (legitimate or illegitimate) might exceed the revenues. This means that the price of hard currency goes up. This is what happened. The new price might attract foreign currency into the country or decrease Jordan's needs for it through the decrease in the importation of foreign products and services which is the more likely possibility.

It seems that the CBJ, which used to set the price by depending on cables from international money markets, will now depend on the prices used by people in the parallel market. In this way, it will prevent the transfer of foreign currency revenues from the exchange organ to the exchangers. Some sides believe that the CBJ might offer higher prices than the money exchangers and foil their plans, thus creating a conviction among the people that the CBJ prices are not artificial and the price of the dinar is not exaggerated, but the opposite is true. Therefore, the demand on the dollar will become supply.

Fortunately for the CBJ, its measures come at a time when the international dollar price has gone down by five percent within 2 days. This allows it to maneuvre and burn the fingers of those wagering on the dollar.

Forces Commander Ja'ja' on Situation
PM1810135188 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Oct 88 p 3

[Interview with Lebanese Forces Commander Samir Ja'ja' by Ghassan Shirbil in Beirut; date not given]

[Text] [Shirbil] Damascus and Washington are declaring adherence to what has been called the Murphy agreement and you continue to reject it. What is the way out of this crisis?

[Ja'ja'] You must note one main difference here. The Americans are saying that they adhere to the agreement with Syria on the necessity of holding presidential elections in Lebanon, which we are also working for and consider an urgent necessity. Only the Syrians talk about insistence on Deputy Mikha'il Dahir as president.

So the crisis was created not by us but by those who were behind moving the venue of the chamber session from Mansur Palace to Al-Najmah Square, to prevent a number of deputies from getting there.

[Shirbil] You have recently met with the U.S. ambassador. Would you bet on a change in the U.S. position?

[Ja'ja'] In practical terms the U.S.-Syrian agreement fell after 23 September and the Americans are now looking for a way to begin again and find new options. There may be a new American move within 2 weeks, even before the U.S. election.

[Shirbil] The U.S.-Syrian agreement showed clear disagreement between you and Washington. What are the dimensions of the disagreement?

[Ja'ja'] There were differences in assessment. They gave priority to the presidential election. We too insist on the election but consider that it is extremely dangerous to Lebanon's independence and sovereignty for a candidate to succeed through means outside the election process framework.

[Shirbil] When do you expect the presidential election to be held?

[Ja'ja'] It will be difficult to hold the election as long as Syria insists on certain positions, such as insistence on Al-Najmah Square, where it is in control of security. I would have liked Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni to take the position dictated by his patriotic convictions, despite my knowledge of the extent of the pressure put on him.

[Shirbil] What about the chamber chairmanship elections scheduled for 18 October?

[Ja'ja'] That is a parliamentary matter, but I believe that this too is faced with the same problems as the presidential elections, such as the problem of the venue.

[Shirbil] Some people accuse you of preventing the meeting of deputies and of holding some deputies in the eastern area.

[Ja'ja'] That is not true at all. The deputies have freedom of movement. The deputies you are talking about are the ones who themselves decided not to go to Al-Najmah Square, and those who did go to the western area were detained or harassed (Deputies Farid Sarhan and Kamil al-As'ad). I would here like to ask Lebanese and Arab public opinion about the side which divided the chamber of deputies by playing the venue transfer game.

[Shirbil] So, no election and a tug of war between two governments. Is this the beginning of partition?

[Ja'ja'] It is wrong to speak of two governments. There is only one government formed in accordance with the constitution and that is General 'Awn's government. As regards the question of partition, it is being raised as an alarmist tactic. We work for liberation, not partition. If we wanted partition we would not have called for the withdrawal of all foreign armies from Lebanon. Our only option is liberation, and we have faith in the Lebanese people's ability to agree when foreign pressures are lifted.

[Shirbil] What is your gamble in pursuit of that option?

[Ja'ja'] We are depending above all on the free Lebanese people from all factions and regions and on our willpower, steadfastness, and commitment to our land and people. We then depend on the Arab states, which we hope will revive their role. Third, we depend on the whole world, with the United States, France, and the Soviet Union in the forefront.

[Shirbil] Does this mean that you favor Arabization of the crisis, and do you expect Arab moves in this connection?

[Ja'ja'] Certainly. We now have more Arab contacts than ever before. Several Arab states are preparing an initiative. The Arab foreign ministers conference marks the beginning and that process will, I expect, be completed within the context of the Arab League. Lebanon is one of the Arab League's founders. The anomaly that has existed for years must be corrected. The Arab moderates should not accept being isolated from Lebanon and prevented from helping it. The role of the Arab moderates should not be impeded. There is a need to restore the balance in the Arab arena.

The time has come for an initiative to rectify matters. Is it not clear yet that the harm done by certain sides to the Palestinian cause is a hundred times greater than the harm inflicted by Israel? The time has come to rectify the situation through a move by the main Arab states which have the power of decision.

[Shirbil] Statements have been made in the western sector claiming that you have obtained arms and funds from Iraq, and it has been claimed Iraq did that to settle the score with Syria. What is the limit of relations with Iraq?

[Ja'ja'] The limit of relations with Iraq is Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, and Iraq is one of the states which respect them most. We will never hesitate to strengthen our relations with the neighboring states and particularly with Iraq and other Arab states.

We will waste no opportunity to get aid that would help us liberate our country from the occupation of the foreign forces that are now in Lebanon. Every foreign presence on our territory is out of place and must be removed.

[Shirbil] There are those in the eastern area who fear that you may be about to embark on a costly adventure despite the existence of some guarantees. What about that?

[Ja'ja'] We are not the cause of the present state of affairs. We had called for a compromise president, but certain sides sought to impose one. We do not seek adventure, but we do not agree to Lebanon's subjugation to any side. Our duty is to defend our land and people and to prevent the fall of Lebanon. Regional and international circumstances have not changed over the past years, but the position of the Arab states as whole has improved. The Arabs have a real vested interest in the return of peace to Lebanon.

[Shirbil] What about the claim about Israeli visits and the return of the Israelis to East Beirut?

[Ja'ja'] These claims are unfounded. There is no truth in them whatsoever. Incidentally, I want to stress that the Arab media should not continue to be at the mercy of rumors and a fertile imagination, which fabricates and spreads these rumors to fulfill certain ambitions. We are willing to receive representatives of all the Arab media and let them investigate all aspects of the situation in all parts of the eastern sector. They would certainly discover that these charges are unfounded.

[Shirbil] You have welcomed the recent French moves. Do you not fear that Washington might foil these moves?

[Ja'ja'] No. France is trying to help because the U.S. move was unsuccessful. The French initiative reflects the depth of ties between the Lebanese and French people and shows that France's attitude to Lebanon is one of sympathy that at times surpasses interests.

[Shirbil] On 3 October the Lebanese Forces took control of the last stronghold of former President al-Jumayyil. Was that a punishment for his visit to Syria just before the end of his term of office?

[Ja'ja'] No, that decision was made before the visit. There is no leniency when it comes to unifying weaponry. It is not permissible for every politician to have his own militia. The days of security fragmentation are gone forever.

[Shirbil] President al-Jumayyil complains about pressures and says that some workers in certain institutions have been forced to forgo their shares.

[Ja'ja'] All the institutions which he built with funds from the Phalangist Party and the resistance will be returned to them.

[Shirbil] Does Al-Jumayyil at present enjoy freedom of political activity?

[Ja'ja'] Yes, he is active and he meets with officials and politicians.

[Shirbil] All this means that you entered into an alliance with him only to swoop down on him when the opportunity presented itself.

[Ja'ja'] There was no alliance. Even coordination on certain issues was difficult.

[Shirbil] Do you think he formed the military government to keep you out?

[Ja'ja'] He did not even want the military government.

[Shirbil] What did he want?

[Ja'ja'] Nobody knows.

[Shirbil] How do you view his political future?

[Ja'ja'] That depends on the extent of public support for his policies and for the impression that he left on the people and on his aides. There was some terrible corruption.

[Shirbil] It has been rumored that you intend to enforce a "where did you get it?" law [to determine sources of wealth]. Is that true?

[Ja'ja'] That law should be enforced and it should apply everywhere, but such a step should be taken by the state.

[Shirbil] Would you accept application of that law to you?

[Ja'ja'] Certainly.

[Shirbil] Do you not fear disclosure of your bank account?

[Ja'ja'] (Laughing) Not at all—and I am ready for that at any moment.

[Shirbil] In our political life people in high positions seem to be interested in accumulating wealth. Do you have no such desire?

[Ja'ja'] I belong to a different school. I believe they accumulate wealth to achieve power.

[Shirbil] It is claimed in the western sector that you struck at Al-Jumayyil's influence because you wanted to monopolize decisionmaking in the eastern sector.

[Ja'ja'] I find it strange that those shedding crocodile tears for Al-Jumayyil are the very same people who boycotted him for years and who divided the institutions to frustrate him.

[Shirbil] After Al-Jumayyil the only one left is Gen 'Awn. When will the confrontation between you and him occur?

[Ja'ja'] There is no danger of confrontation with Gen 'Awn, and I advise those who bank on that not to waste their time.

[Shirbil] Some people maintain that he will not allow a presidential election to take place unless he becomes president.

[Ja'ja'] That is not true at all. His patriotism is not in doubt at all.

[Shirbil] Did you and 'Awn force Al-Jumayyil to form the military government?

[Ja'ja'] No, but he could not have left the country without a government after the failure of several formulas.

[Shirbil] What if the Maronite patriarchate, having been authorized by some deputies, submitted some names of presidential candidates for consideration by those concerned with the crisis?

[Ja'ja'] We are for any new initiative to revive the presidential election process and bring in a compromise president.

[Shirbil] When do you feel fear?

[Ja'ja'] Only when the options are evenly balanced and one has to make one choice without complete clarity, but once a decision is made there is no fear and one moves head-on to implement it.

[Shirbil] I meant to ask if you fear the possibility of assassination, particularly as you have been the target of several attempts.

[Ja'ja'] No, I have been living like this for the past 10 years.

[Shirbil] Your enemies say that, while you are capable of foiling agreements, you are incapable of reaching agreement, and Prime Minister al-Huss says that not everyone who takes to extremism becomes a party to the issue.

[Ja'ja'] On the contrary. I am the one who is capable of reaching agreement with the Lebanese sides. We have freedom of opinion and decisions but they [the West Beirut leaders] do not.

May God forgive Prime Minister al-Huss. His intentions may be good but he is helpless. I am sure that many of the steps he takes are not decided by him.

[Shirbil] When will you lay your hands on the Phalangist Party?

[Ja'ja'] I believe that democracy will be strengthened in the party once it rids itself of the blemishes.

[Shirbil] What would you do if some uprising toppled you from your position as Lebanese Forces commander?

[Ja'ja'] That will not happen.

[Shirbil] But it was through an uprising that you got to where you are.

[Ja'ja'] Building institutions, clarity of aims, and consultation are factors which prevent that from happening.

Deputies Urge Al-Husayni To Continue as Speaker

NC1810124588 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1048 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Statement issued following meeting of deputies at Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni's office in West Beirut on 18 October; read by Chamber Secretary General Ihsan Abu Khalil—Live]

[Text] Deputies Farid Jubran, Hashim al-Husayni, 'Abdallah al-Rasi, Mikha'il Dahir, 'Abd al-Latif al-Zayn, Muhammad Yusuf Baydun, 'Ali al-Khalil, Rashid al-Sulh, Jamil Kibbi, Farid Sarhal, Nazih al-Bizri, Khoren Khanamerian, Hasan al-Rifa'i, Rashid al-A'war, 'Ali al-'Atallah, 'Adil 'Usayran, Tawfiq 'Assaf, Husayn Mansur, Talal al-Mir'ibi, Salih al-Khayr Zaki Mazbudi, and 'Abd al-Mawla Amhaj attended today's Chamber session. Deputy Bakhus al-Hakim apologized for not attending because of illness and Deputy Amin al-Hafiz because he is abroad.

The deputies met and made the following decision:

We are eager to safeguard the unity of constitutional institutions, foremostly the Chamber of Deputies, which expresses the unity of the homeland. We are also eager to perform our constitutional and national duty during the present unprecedented and difficult circumstances in the country.

However, the Chamber could not convene today due to the lack of legal quorum because of the present situation; consequently, it failed to elect a speaker, deputy speaker, and the members of the Chamber bureau.

Out of our adherence to the need to elect a president for the Republic as soon as possible, so that we may emerge from the anomalous and serious situation the country is experiencing, we declare that Chamber Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, Deputy Speaker Dr Albert Mukhaybir, and all members of the Chamber bureau should continue to perform their duties and exercise their powers with a view to ensuring the holding of a session to elect the Chamber bureau staff and then to perform the duty of electing a president of the Republic.

On this occasion, we cannot but re-emphasize the unity of the homeland's territory, people, and institutions and reject all forms of partition and settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon. We also insist on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions related to ending the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory, particularly Resolution No 425.

Al-Husayni on Lack of Quorum

NC1810204388 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Commenting on the circumstances which prevailed at the Chamber of Deputies Headquarters at Al-Najmah Square today and on the lack of a quorum to elect a new speaker, Chamber Speaker Husayn al-Husayni said this evening:

I need not explain the great ambiquity of these constitutional isues, and the strenuous efforts being made to work out solutions because the groups that get agitated over these issues have never stopped at the constitutional or legal limits or norms to justify their deeds. Their sole objective has always been to destroy the unity of land, people, and institutions, especially the democratic parliamentary republican system, which is linked with the unity of the people and the coexistence of their sons.

Speaker al-Husayni added: As the entire Lebanese public knows, wherever I am I will continue my policy, which will lead to unity of the legislature, which, in turn, expresses the unity of the homeland and the coexistence of its sons. My policy will also enable the legislature to perform its national duty of electing a new president of the Republic as soon as possible and to achieve political reforms that are bound to produce a national reconciliation among the Lebanese and regain the state's sovereignty and independence.

Speaker al-Husayni went on to say: Our only option is the struggle to safeguard the national entity, the democratic parliamentary republican system, and the state, because these are integrated, indivisible matters. Everyone knows what kind of authorities I have to assume. Accepting these heavy burdens means I must insist on defending the homeland and people in their most difficult circumstances. That is my national duty.

Forces Council Comments on Electing Speaker

NC1910084288 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] The Lebanese Forces Command Council has stated that the Chamber of Deputies' authority will be deemed valid only if it is chaired by its oldest member, who would assume his nationalist duties and ensure the parliamentary work's continuity. The council called upon the oldest member in the chamber to invite members of the Chamber of Deputies to a meeting to elect a speaker and to ensure that a democratic, free atmosphere prevails to allow for the presidential elections.

The Lebanese Forces Council said that obstructing the election of the chamber speaker is the result of a clear-cut decision to obstruct the functions of the Chamber of Deputies, by designating Al-Najmah Square the venue for the session while the majority of the deputies continue to demand that Mansur Palace be the chamber headquarters and the venue for its sessions.

The Lebanese Forces Council added that the objective behind selecting Al-Najmah Square as venue for the chamber sessions, including those for electing the speaker and electing the Republic's president, is to deliberately obstruct the election of a speaker, after the earlier blocking of the presidential election, and to create fake authority.

The council added that the session venue had been transferred by force and against the will of the vast majority of the deputies. Those who have chosen Al-Najmah Square as a venue for parliamentary sessions, the council added, are held responsible for undermining the constitutional institutions and blocking their duties, with a view to compromising the country's unity.

On the other hand, the Lebanese Forces Command Council lauded the role of Bkirki [seat of the Maronite Patriarch], expressing its readiness to respond to whatever endeavors the patriarchiate might undertake to wield enough Lebanese national will to elect a president acceptable to all Lebanese and not imposed upon them from abroad.

The Lebanese Forces Council expressed its support for all sincere Arab overtures and called on the Arab League to play an effective role in restoring the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon and the freedom of the Lebanese. This could be achieved by exerting pressure on all foreign armies and forces to leave the country and by achieving inter-Lebanese reconciliation and detente.

'Awn: Country Will Survive Expiration of Posts

NC1810141588 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Statement and response to question by Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn following cabinet meeting in Beirut on 18 October—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] ['Awn] The cabinet discussed the general political situation and satisfaction was voiced over the stand taken by UAE President Shaykh Zayid Ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan. We are thankful for Shaykh Zayid's stands and hope that other Arab officials will show the same interest.

The cabinet instructed the economy minister to head Lebanon's delegation to the international fair in Baghdad.

The cabinet also reviewed administrative work to ensure that life proceeds smoothly for all citizens in all areas. The cabinet also reviewed the positions of some local politicians as well as some international positions. [Words indistinct] project their bad mood on the general Lebanese situation. Lebanon is healthier today than before.

If some people have failed to achieve their goals and if they are in a bad shape today, they should not equate their lot with that of Lebanon. The Lebanese situation is a lot better today and we ask these people to stop wailing, crying, and shedding crocodile tears.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] Lebanon without a president or speaker. Is this a chance [words indistinct] the country disintegrate or for making reforms?

['Awn] When I was still Army commander, before heading the current government, I said that even if presidential elections did not take place by 23 September this would not be the end for Lebanon. Lebanon existed before and continued to exist after 23 September. Lebanon is a nation. A nation makes republics, presidents, and regimes. The Lebanese are still alive. They have lived through different regimes and survived them.

If some institutions have failed to retain their vitality and their role, if some persons have fallen in this crisis, this does not mean the end of the world, not at all. The flame of life is still burning in our souls. We are determined to have a future ahead of us. Maybe we will find a better system for the future. Maybe we will retain the current system. Maybe we will elect a president of the Republic. We are not tied to one course of history. [passage omitted]

Al-Huss Appointments 'Invalid,' 'Nonexistent'

NC1410135988 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 14 Oct 88

[Text] We begin the political page with a report from B'abda where a meeting of the Council of Ministers has been held. Following the meeting, Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn expressed thanks for every international initiative which can assist Lebanon to regain its sovereignty and independence. He declared that any initiative which does not seek to attain those objectives is a waste of time.

Regarding the appointments made by the Al-Sana'i' grouping [Al-Huss goverment], the prime minister said: We regard them as invalid and nonexistent, particularly as they have proceeded from foreign parties and not from those who announced them.

Here is a recording of Gen 'Awn's statements:

[Begin recording] ['Awn] Today's meeting was for a general assessment of the domestic and foreign situations, the status of the departments in general, and the security situation. We have noticed that there has been continuous improvement in these areas. At the same time we studied some reports submitted to the ministries. We had earlier instructed that such reports be submitted by the directors general of the ministries with the aim of implementing appropriate solutions.

We have instructed officials to translate them into practical measures so that we might adopt resolutions concerning these matters in future cabinet meetings. So today's meeting consisted of a general assessment of the situation. It was a reconsideration of calculations in order to rectify ongoing functions.

[Reporter] Prime Minister, do you have any particular comment on the resolutions issued yesterday by the Al-Sana'i' meeting, especially the appointment of a director of public security?

['Awn] We consider these appointments nonexistent and invalid. We feel that such behavior—I do not know what to call it—has not proceeded from those who announced it. It has proceeded from foreign parties which are exerting pressures on them. I am saying this with total frankness. We are repeating this for the hundredth time: that according to constitutional provisions and norms, this government is the legitimate one and handles the affairs of all the Lebanese. In accordance with the conventions, it represents the legitimate constitutional government. Indeed, it is the legitimate government according to the National Covenant.

The National Convenant entrusted executive power to a Council of Ministers chaired by a Christian Maronite president. Hence, even in the event of the formation of a Christian Maronite government—pardom me, a government chaired by a Christian Maronite—no one can say

we have departed from the conventions and spirit of the National Covenant. Why then this political opposition, which is inappropriate unless there is a political stance with dimensions other than those which we know among ourselves in Lebanon.

[Reporter] How do you view international moves, particularly recent initiatives?

['Awn] We regard every international initiative which helps us to regain our sovereignty and independence and to liberate our territories as a blessed initiative. Every initiative that does not basically include this concept would be a kind of pasttime or a waste of time.

[Reporter] What is your opinion of the results of the Shevardnadze-Dumas meeting?

['Awn] With regard to what issue? Would you be more specific?

[Reporter] Regarding the Lebanese issue.

['Awn] I am telling you that after we have studied the issue carefully, we see that an initiative leads to the restoration of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and the liberation of Lebanese territories, then we will support it. If it does not do this, then it will regrettably be an initiative which is made with goodwill but would bear no fruit. We are waiting for something which would lead to the desired results. We hope that they are acting in such a spirit.

[Reporter] Prime Minister, will your government make any international or regional contacts?

['Awn] Contacts are going on all the time. However, there is always something which is made public and something which is not. Hopefully, matters will depend on the results of these contacts. [end recording]

Al-Huss Comments on Political Situation

PM1410132188 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Oct 88 p 3

[Interview with Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss by Ghassan Shirbil in Beirut; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shirbil] There is no president of the Republic, a Chamber of Deputies speaker may not be elected, and the government situation is known. So where are we heading?

[Al-Huss] Toward a solution sooner or later, preferably sooner.

[Shirbil] Is this merely wishful thinking or are practical efforts being made to find a solution?

[Al-Huss] There can be no doubt that efforts are being made at the required level to find a solution. Of course, a lot of work is being done internally but, as several states have been involved in active contacts with all the states concerned, the matter is no longer confined to the internal sphere. We must admit that these efforts have so far not been fruitful enough to permit an announcement, but active contacts are continuing nonetheless and are bound to bear fruit, perhaps in the not too distant future.

[Shirbil] What are the features of the solution being worked out?

[Al-Huss] We believe that Lebanon's fundamental issue at this stage is that of Lebanese unity. An aspect of the problem manifested itself when the presidential elections stumbled and it was then reflected in fragmentation at state level because of former President Amin al-Jumayyil's formation, at the last moment, of the so-called "military government," despite our warnings against such a step undermining the country's general well-being.

We believe that our main task must be to confirm Lebanon's unity because we feel that Lebanon's unity and existence are threatened. That process should begin with presidential elections because strengthening of the country's unity must begin by securing unity of authority through the presence of a president and a cabinet. The process should begin with that and end with the achievement of the long-awaited national accord. [passage omitted]

[Shirbil] You recently met with Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam. Is there anything new in the Syrian position?

[Al-Huss] There is nothing new in the Syrian position. When we visited Damascus, [Foreign] Minister al-Shar' had just returned from New York, and he briefed us on the atmosphere and the Lebanese aspect of the meetings he held there.

[Shirbil] What about the U.S. position?

[Al-Huss] It is still committed to the agreement it reached with Syria but it cannot impose it. That much is clear so far. At any rate, we are in contact with the Americans, the French, and the Vatican, in addition to Syria.

[Shirbil] France has been noticeably active recently on the question of Lebanon and it has proposed that the presidential elections be held under UN force umbrella. What do you think?

[Al-Huss] What has been termed a French initiative is, as confirmed by the French ambassador, just an idea mentioned by Foreign Minister Dumas, who thought that it might help Lebanon. We do not see it as a good idea, but

we do believe that France has an essential role to play in connection with Lebanon at this crucial stage. We would welcome any French initiative to help Lebanon.

[Shirbil] Do you not fear a major military explosion if the current political crisis continues?

[Al-Huss] A military confrontation would mean the failure of all sides. Nobody should contemplate such a thing because everyone would be a loser. I think it likely that everyone is aware of this as there have been no military developments.

[Shirbil] General 'Awn says that his government is the only legitimate government and that yours is a mere grouping. What is your answer to that?

[Al-Huss] I do not want to get into an argument again on legitimacy. We have passed that stage. Let us put the details aside. The solution lies in the election of a new president and the formation of a new cabinet that would eliminate all the abnormal conditions and resolve the question of Lebanon's unity. We do not want to manage a crisis. We must continue to behave on the basis that this is a crisis and that we must emerge from it. There should be no complacency in the current situation.

[Shirbil] What if no president is elected?

[Al-Huss] We will continue to work for a way out of the crisis.

[Shirbil] Do you intend to enlarge your cabinet and make new appointments?

[Al-Huss] What is needed are elections that would end the abnormal situation. This matter must get top priority. Incidentally, we must not turn administration into a battlefield.

[Shirbil] There are those who believe that you contributed to the weakening of Amin al-Jumayyil, thus enabling the Lebanese Forces to strike at his influence and positions.

[Al-Huss] Those who attack and annoy Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil today are the very same people who at one time blamed us for boycotting him.

[Shirbil] [Lebanese Forces Executive Committee Chairman] Samir Ja'ja' is now the stronger party in the eastern area. Some people believe that the crisis will continue unless you agree to a dialogue with him. What do you say?

[Al-Huss] Not everyone who takes extremist positions becomes a party [to the issue]. That would encourage extremism. There are constitutional institutions. Who appointed as parties those who obstruct the Chamber of Deputies meetings? The place for dialogue is the Chamber of Deputies. So, let the Chamber be freed.

Al-Huss: 'Arabs Must Take Action' on Crisis

NC1610171888 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Text] Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss was quoted today as saying that, if the Arab world does not take quick action, Lebanon's crisis will deteriorate and become similar to the Palestinian problem.

The Abu Dhabi-based AL-ITTIHAD newspaper also has quoted Prime Minister al-Huss as saying that Lebanon has the right to look forward to an Arab initiative commensurate with the extent of the danger threatening it. In an interview to the paper, Al-Huss said that he believes that the Arabs must take action to confront the plot or else prepare for a new crisis similar to the Palestinian problem. Al-Huss added that the appointment of General 'Awn's government threatens the final partitioning of Lebanon.

In a separate interview with AL-ITTIHAD, to be published today, PSP leader Minister Walid Junblatt says that he will fight any attempt to set up a new secessionist state.

Junblatt on 'Awn Government, 'Conspiracies'

JN1810122088 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 16 Oct 88

[Text] Beirut—PSP leader Walid Junblatt has stated that the nationalist forces will not permit the establishment of a second Israel in Lebanon even if the war lasts 100 years. He said that the battle for uniting Lebanon has started against the Zionized agent forces that are led by the "Awn-Ja'ja'" alliance. Junblatt pointed out that the Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist forces and Damascus form the triangle of steadfastness and confrontation of the resettlement conspiracy and the conspiracy to partition Lebanon. He said he is pessimistic with respect to the future of Lebanon.

In an interview with AL-ITTIHAD, Junblatt said that the meetings held by the Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist forces seek to achieve the unity of ranks and to fortify the nationalist and Islamic areas against any attempt by the agents of the Lebanese Forces militias, Israel, and the Lebanese intelligence service to sow sedition.

Junblatt said the establishment of the "Lebanese Forces statelet" will be a second Israel at the flank of Syria and the Arab nation. He added: That's why we will not permit its establishment, regardless of the sacrifices, and even if the war lasts 100 years. He said: I can affirm that the battle for uniting Lebanon and entrenching its Arab identity has begun against the Zionized agent forces which are led by the 'Awn-Ja'ja' alliance which has seized power by force and with Israel's direct support.

He pointed out that the nationalist forces will strongly reply to any detonation of the situation which the other party may carry out. He added that the financial and military assistance that the Zionized forces in East Beirut receive does not scare the nationalist forces who will enhance their alliance with Syria.

Regarding the weapons the nationalist forces receive from Syria, Junblatt said: It is an honor for us to receive weapons from Syria and from all the Arab nationalist forces to fight Israel in the south and the agents on the domestic front.

Junblatt said that 'Awn must be relieved of his duties because he has led a military coup and seized power by force with the help of Ja'ja' and Israel. He added: Dr Salim al-Huss' government is the only legitimate government which must dismiss 'Awn and appoint a new army commander in his place. He said that the Al-Huss government must also court-martial 'Awn.

On whether he expects the success of current international and regional contacts for holding presidential elections in Lebanon soon, Junblatt said: What concerns us now is not only to hold presidential elections but also to save Lebanon from the partitioning conspiracy that the 'Awn-Ja'ja' alliance is carrying out in coordination with Israel.

Asked if he is optmitistic about Lebanon's future, he said: Lebanon cannot rest unless it liberates itself from the Israeli occupation, eliminates the Zionized agent forces, and establishes a secular Arab state.

On the relationship between Amal and the Palestinians in southern Lebanon Junblatt said: We work with the brothers in Amal, with friend Nabih Birri, and with the Palestinian brothers to avert the region any battle, and to ward off any new camps war from heroic southern Lebanon which can only benefit the Israeli enemy and the agents.

He concluded by stating that the resettlement and partitioning conspiracy that was formulated by Henry Kissinger will not succeed so long as the nationalist forces pursue their struggle and are directly supported by the Syrian army under President Hafiz al-Asad.

Birri Denies Shi'ites Want Separate State

NC1410150288 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Oct 88

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri, leader of the Amal Movement, emphasized today that the Shi'ites in Lebanon have one united homeland: Lebanon in its entirety, with its sovereignty, justness, and Arab characater, a Lebanon liberated from Israel and its agents.

Responding to Lebanese Forces Deputy Commander Karim Paqraduni's accusing the Shi'ites of establishing a Shi'ite state in Lebanon, Minister Birri said in a statement today:

After returning from Iraq and in a television interview preceeded by several interviews with the Arab press, Paqraduni emphasized that two states will be established in Lebanon: a Shi'ite state and a Maronite state.

Minister Birri said: This is a regrettable exaggeration about the Shi'ites, whose objectives and aims are no secret to anybody, especially among some Arab and international circles, designed to ensure the continuation of hegemony over the Lebanese people. It is also regrettable that this intrigue has been heeded in some international forums.

In an interview with UAE television and the Abu Dhabi paper AL-ITTIHAD carried by the Amal magazine today, Minister Birri declared that Lebanon is now experiencing an Israeli invasion more serious and momentous than that of 1982, because it is a political invasion under an enormous Arab cover.

Minister Birri said: I understand that there is a conflict, dispute, or competition between one Arab country and another—in a sense there is a dispute between an Arab country and Syria—but I cannot understand why we should have a fragmented and divided Lebanon just to spite Syria or why we should support Israel's collaborators in Lebanon.

Fadlallah Denies Links With Hostage Figure

NC1810105688 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah [Hizballah spiritual leader] today denied having any ties with Iranian physician Ibrahim al-Nazir, who according to British journalist Gordon Thomas is in charge of foreign hostages in Lebanon.

Fadlallah added: I have no formal ties with Hizballah or any other Islamic movement. He noted that he has links with all regional circles.

Hizballah Accuses Amal of Detaining Members

NC1910071488 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Hizballah yesterday accused the Amal Movement of arresting more of its members in the South. A statement distributed by Hizballah in Beirut said that since last Sunday the Amal Movement has detained 90 persons from 15 southern villages and expelled 113 others, including 4 ulema. Hizballah also accused Amal of breaking into the homes of its followers in Beirut's southern suburb.

A security report from the southern suburb indicates that Hizballah set up stationary roadblocks in the neighborhood last night, kidnapping Amal members. The same report states that one such roadblock was set up opposite the Bi'r al-'Abd mosque, while another was spotted behind the Al-Ghubayrah secondary school, under the command of a man named Muhammad Salim. A third roadblock was set up opposite the building housing Hizballah's Shura Council.

In another development, pro-'Arafat gunmen riding in a Range Rover have opened fire at another vehicle carrying Hizballah men in the Hayy Mu'awwad area of the Al-Shayyah district [in the southern suburb], after chasing it in the Bi'r al-'Abd area. The incident caused tension in the area.

Communists Urge Nonsectarian Program

NC1710143088 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Excerpts] The Lebanese Communist Party today called for the unity of all patriotic and progressive forces under the banner of a comprehensive national program and a single national command, to topple the fascist military partitionist entity and restore Lebanon's unity, reassert its Arab character, and guarantee its democratic development. This call formed the principal theme of a statement issued following a plenary meeting of the Lebanese Communist Paty's Central Committee. The meeting was devoted to the discussion of recent developments. [passage omitted]

The Communist Party's Central Committee declared that the isolationist and sectarian plan benefits from other plans which are apparent (?opposed) to it but which are essentially complementary. For this reason, confronting this plan must be founded on nonsectarian program, symbols, framework, and methods. It said that it is not possible to confront the slogan of a Christian Lebanon by raising the solgan of a Muslim Lebanon, but by raising the slogan of an Arab, democratic, and nonsectarian Lebanon.

Another point in the basic principles specified by the Lebanese Communist Party's Central Committee for the national confrontation program stressed that the Lebanese national confrontation must be comprehensive and able to draw the support of the largest possible segment of public opinion, including such circles as are seeking to form a democratic Christian stream which seeks a solution different from the logic of the fascists.

The statement affirmed that it has become imperative for patriotic and progressive forces to mobilize their capabilities and alert all their potential forces, beginning with the nationalist brigades in the Army, and including those of the political parties and other nationalist forces and encompassing the greatest possible number of people. The statement noted that a military confrontation appears inevitable. [passage omitted]

The Central Committee emphasized that the government must act decisively and transcend the current stagnation and the mere administration of affairs. It asserted the need to fill vacant ministerial posts, expand the government, dismiss the Army commander and appoint another commander and a general staff which would undertake the mobilizing of nationalist brigades and units in the Lebanese Army.

The Central Committee also notes the need to reactivate administrative functions and adopt all appropriate measures to meet the requirements of popular steadfastness. [passage omitted]

The Central Committee asserted that confronting the partionists, sectarian, and fascist scheme is a task for the political parties and all their functions [passage omitted].

Al-Jumayyil: 'No Intention of Quitting Politics'

PM1810155588 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Oct 88 p3

[Report on interview with former president Amin al-Jumayyil by Ghassan Shirbil in Beirut; date not given]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Salim al-Huss is in his office at the government house in Al-Sana'i' preoccupied with "Lebanon's unity." Prime Minister General 'Awn is in his "interim" office at the presidential palace preoccupied with "Lebanon's independence and sovereignty." Lebanese Forces Commander Dr Samir Ja'ja' is in his office in Al-Karantina preoccupied with the withdrawal "of all foreign armies."

What about the fourth player who was thrown out of the ring, former president Amin al-Jumayyil? We asked the other three about his present and future but did not get satisfactory answers. So we had to ask him. There were many rumors: He is under house arrest; he is not allowed to talk about what happened; he is packing his bags getting ready for exile; he tried to leave but they stopped him. [passage omitted]

And yet more and more rumors: His telephone is tapped and his visitors are under observation; his advisers advised him to leave; all the institutions he built with party funds have been confiscated; he left secretly with his family for Larnaca and intends to settle in Paris. The rumors thrived on Al-Jumayyil's silence. He has not commented on developments and has not made any statements or given any interviews.

At the set time we gave the taxi driver the address. He did not like it. He said that the man was finished and would have nothing to say and that the leaf has been turned over. He advised us to wait until the situation became clear, but in the end he did not object to taking us there, saying "I am only a taxi driver and do not care about politics." [passage omitted]

Amin al-Jumayyil, smiling, received us in his office. His quick steps and firm grip that denote youth have not changed. He said that he had not given any interviews and had no intention of giving one now. We asked him some questions.

He said he would answer on condition that what he says is not published. We agreed and he talked. He spoke for 50 minutes about his views, his attitude, and his fears regarding the general situation. He was firm and demonstrated strong nerves but his tone was the tone of someone who has been hurt but who wanted to give the impression that the blow was not fatal and that his turn would come. There was a mixture of bitterness and tiredness.

Amin al-Jumayyil has no intention of quitting politics or retiring. He has no intention of settling abroad although he might leave for a short rest, but only after the situation stabilizes. It was as if Amin al-Jumayyil considers what happened to be merely a loss of one round and not of the war.

He perhaps decided to wait, bide his time, and bank on the failure of those who are now in the forefront at which time he would return as the savior ready to shoulder the responsibility of a settlement. [passage omitted]

Ba'th Party Criticizes 'Campaign' Against Iraq

NC1610193188 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Text] The regional command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party in Lebanon [the pro-Iraq branch] has affirmed that the campaign against Iraq does not serve Lebanon's interest and stressed that the Lebanese should enjoy a greater degree of independence to determine their domestic options.

In a statement it released, the party asserted that, at a time when the Lebanese supposedly need any Arab and international effort to assist them, a political and media campaign is being organized against Arab and international parties which have proved their concern for Lebanon's unity. As part of this campaign, the United States is now being viewed in a positive light, even before the ink has dried on the resolutions agreed to at the Carlton Hotel meeting, where the U.S. position had been described as a blatant interference in Lebanese affairs.

A call also had been made at that meeting, for action to counter the U.S. interference. A general strike had been called for at that time as a sign that the U.S. position was the subject of popular condemnation. As in the past, some areas today have called for a general strike; however, the purpose of such a strike is not to denounce the position of the United States, the strategic ally of Israel, but to denounce Iraq.

The Ba'th Party has asked those who have been called upon to stage a strike tomorrow: What aspect or aspects of the U.S. position have changed and thereby transformed it from a negative into a positive stand? Has the U.S.-Syrian agreement on Lebanon become a national one that must be defended against collapse just because the Syrian regime is a party to it?

If the Syrian regime is in a bind because of the accumulation of negative factors which it has reaped as a result of its role at the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Arab levels, it is not in the interest of the Lebanese to be [words indistinct] this bind, but they must utilize it to end the usurpation of their national decision and to act in a manner that serves the interest of Lebanon and its Arab nation.

Iraqi Supply of Weapons to Forces Viewed

NC1810082488 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] REUTER carried a press inquiry by its Beirut correspondent, Peter Summerdon, on Iraq's relationship with the Lebanese Forces and the reason for Iraq's supplying weapons to them.

REUTER maintains that Iraq, which has emerged from its war with Iran as a principal competitor in the Middle East, is supplying many weapons to the hardline Christian militia in order to challenge Syria's role in Lebanon.

Citing Western diplomats, REUTER says Iraq has been donating weapons worth tens of millions of dollars over the past 6 months. Lebanese security sources have confirmed that the arms shipments, which included heavy weapons, increased last month.

REUTER says the Iraqi weapons which reached the Lebanese Forces by sea have provided Samir Ja'ja' [commander of the Lebanese Forces] with the military strength to boost his new political influence. Citing a political source, REUTER says that the Lebanese Forces now feel that nobody can stop them due to Iraq's continuing support.

Diplomatic and Lebanese Forces sources have said that a Soviet-made rocket launcher and a T-55 tank left Beirut port one night this month. These were a small sample of the many weapons, most of which were seized from the Iranians, that Iraq has been supplying the Lebanese forces since last March.

Security sources drew attention to the fact that the arms shipment included 64 T-55 tanks, 18 rocket launchers, 20 armored troop carriers, 3 artillery batteries, 30 heavy-caliber machineguns, and approximately 100,000 shells and rockets.

Diplomats have stated that they cannot confirm these reports because they have not seen the heavy-caliber weapons. However, the Lebanese Forces have told port workers in Beirut, who were working overtime at very high wages to unload the shipments, to expect more weapons.

Al-Faruq Group Claims Responsibility for Bombings

NC1810122388 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] An explosive charge went off in Burj al-Barajinah in the southern suburb at about 1030 today, causing material damage.

The Al-Faruq Battalion has claimed responsibility for detonating two explosive charges last night in West Beirut. The targets were two Syrian occupation centers. The first blast took place in Al-Rawshah, not far from the house of Amal official 'Akif Haydar, and the second behind the Bristol Hotel, near the women's prison.

Bomb Near Lahd Militia Patrol Causes Casualties

NC1910073688 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Resistance fighters have announced that at dawn yesterday the Al-Shaqif martyrs unit detonated an explosive charge near a Lahd militia patrol consisting of two troop carriers and two military vehicles. The patrol was moving on the road between Al-Wadi al-Akhdar and Al-'Ayshiyah. One troop carrier was damaged and its passengers were killed or wounded.

Israeli Warplanes Overfly Southern Camps

NC1810125188 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes have reconnoitered Lebanese airspace over the Palestinian camps in the South.

Iraqi Opposition Figure Makes Statement
JN1810153888 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] At 1030 today, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received His Eminence Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, and the delegation accompanying him.

In a statement to the SANA correspondent, His Eminence Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim hailed the Syrian Arab people under His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad who are holding out in the face of the imperialist and Zionist conspiracies targeting the Arab nation.

He said that his current visit to Syria seeks to achieve several objectives, foremost among which are holding talks on a number of issues that are of interest to the Islamic nation and the situation in Iraq in particular and meeting with Syria-based Iraqi brothers who are receiving good care from the Syrian leadership.

His Eminence Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim added: Besides, there are some initiatives which we want to present to several Iraqi national opposition parties with the aim of reaching a decision on joint action. Furthermore, there are other issues which we would like to discuss with the Syrian political leadership within the framework of our international political moves. He described the ruling Iraqi regime as an aggressive one.

He added: This regime has liquidated many soldiers who refused to participate in the war which it launched against Iran. Moreover, this regime carried out liquidations within the ranks of the Iraqi military in general and the ranks of the Iraqi Air Force in particular as this regime executed a group of officers and dismissed another group.

The chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq pointed out that the overall situation in Iraq at this phase is that of escalating the acts of suppression and settling accounts with those who reject and resist the regime.

He added: In contrast, there is an escalation of the popular rejection. Besides, many popular sectors are maintaining readiness to continue the struggle against this regime.

On the support being provided by the fascist Iraqi regime to the 'Awn-Ja'ja' clique, His Eminence Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim said: We believe that the Iraqi regime is performing this mission in cooperation with Israel. We expect that this mission will fail, thanks to the determination and will of the Lebanese people and also to the awareness of the region's peoples who know of this regime's stance.

The chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq paid tribute to the popular uprising being staged in the occupied Arab territories in the face of the Israeli invaders.

Commentary Attacks 'Treasons' of Iraqi Regime
JN1310164188 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Oct 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Since it took power, the Iraqi regime's stands toward the Arabs' central cause, Palestine, have wavered between outbidding over the most extreme Arab stands and relenting to the extent that it plots against the simplest of generally accepted pan-Arab truths. In outbidding or concessions, this regime used to cover its stands with allegations about the firmness of its pan-Arab commitment. It becomes rigid when Arabs unanimously agree on a tactical flexibility to expose Israel and its intransigence. It justifies its rigidity by the claim that Arab unanimity does not stand up to its pan-Arab aspirations. When Arabs become rigid, we find that it is the first of the defeatists. It justifies this by the existence of more important pan-Arab preoccupations, which draw it away from the Arab-Zionist conflict.

More than once during its first years in power, this regime used to reject the Arabs' resort to the United Nations and international legitimacy in order to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. It used to call for the use of force as the only method to solve this conflict and to regain Arab rights. When Arabs resorted to force, that regime explained its weakness and failure to join them by various justifications, such as its preoccupation on other fronts.

In their contradictions and fluctuations, its political stands were not different from its stands toward pan-Arab issues. When Al-Sadat visited occupied Jerusalem; when Arab calls to confront this betrayal were issued; and when these calls took the most rigid of their forms by the formation of the steadfastness and confrontation front, that regime pretended that even that front does not live up to its pan-Arab aspiration in confronting Al-Sadat's treason. The practical alternative to that front proposed by that regime was no more than plotting against it and attacking its stands. In this it joined Al-Sadat himself in his stand toward that front.

Over the past few years, events have proven that when the Iraqi regime decided to join the Arab unanimity and to stop, even for once, its policy of outbidding and deception, it did so not because it wanted to bolster that unanimity, but in order to attack it, destroy it from within, and divert it from its original direction.

We still remember that major change in the Iraqi regime's stand during the Baghdad ninth [Arab] summit conference of 1978. It pretended that it retreated from its previous outbiddings and that it joined other Arabs to

meet even on the minimum level of what had to be achieved in order to face the treasons of Al-Sadat, who was about to sign the Camp David accords at that time.

Time has shown that this surprising change in the Baghdad regime's non-pan-Arab stands did not result in a real change in its treacherous practices. It was hiding behind this change a premeditated plan to employ the Arab unanimity, achieved in Baghdad's summit, not to face Al-Sadat's treason, but to divert it from the original objective and to employ it in the non-pan-Arab, treacherous battle, which that regime was preparing to launch against Iran in order to create a marginal conflict at the expense of the fateful Arabs' conflict against the Zionist enemy. This regime's pan-Arab masks fell when Saddam Husayn took the power directly after he was practicing this power from behind the scenes for sometime.

The war exposed the real face of the regime and its alliances. The depth of relations between Saddam's and Al-Sadat's regimes became clearer with the arms shipment, which began to flow from Cairo to Baghdad to stock fire to the war in the Gulf, in addition to other forms of support.

The West, and Washington in particular, emerged as the strongest of the regime's allies. National, progressive, and pan-Arab forces inside Iraq were liquidated. Retreats in the application of socialism continued and public sector institutions were liquidated.

No sooner had Saddam's war with Iran begun to end, then the new picture of this regime began to emerge very clearly. It is the ally of the Camp David regime in Cairo, the supporter of the deviationist right wing in the Palestinian arena, and the main resource of support for the isolationist clique—allied with Israel—in Lebanon.

This, in summary, is the Iraqi regime's march throughout the last 10 years at least. This march is full of allegations, deception, and forgery in order to blow up all sincere pan-Arab direction and commitment to the Arab nation's fateful issues. The difference between the 1978 Baghdad regime and this regime of 1988, is that its picture became very clear and exposed without any makeup, in spite of its same uninterrupted allegations, outbiddings, and boastings.

A regime that took it upon itself to practice every treacherous act against this nation must find in Syria the archenemy for it and its treasons. Syria will confront the treasons of this regime no matter where they might be; whether on the Lebanese arena, Palestinian arena, or the Arab arena in general.

Paper on Role of 'Saddam Regime' in Lebanon

JN1610151288 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 16 Oct 88

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH affirms that the general strike scheduled to be staged in nationalist areas in Lebanon tomorrow is no doubt a clear call to all sincere parties in our Arab nation—a call for them to condemn the treasonous role being played by the Saddam regime in Lebanon, as this role completely converges with the Israeli role.

AL-BA'TH adds: Enemy war minister Yitzhaq Rabin pays regular visits to East Beirut, where he meets with the isolationist forces, the Zionist experts, and others sent by Saddam as experts to accompany the weapons that he has lavished on the isolationist forces.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: If this serves to show anything, it is that the fascist Saddam regime, which embroiled our Iraqi Arab people in an unjust war with Iran that has nothing to do with their interests, is currently working with the enemies of the Arab nation to create a new reality in the Lebanese arena—a reality that consequently serves Israel's scheme and its plans in our Arab homeland, the plans envisaged in the Torah.

'Israeli-Inspired' Moves in Lebanon Viewed

JN1510164488 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 15 Oct 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Lebanon remains without a president but has two governments. One enjoys parliamentary confidence and represents all of the Lebanese across the political spectrum. The other is part of a project to fragment and partition Lebanon and set up sectarian and confessional entities adverse to the interests of the Lebanese and lacking all the requirements of viability and continuity. The rebel administration is contesting the authority of the legitimate government in helpless, powerless districts trodden under the feet of armed gangs and a handful of undisciplined outlaws.

Meanwhile, with the postponed parliamentary session to name a new president yet to be convened, new attempts are afoot to demolish and paralyze the legitimate and constitutional institutions of the country and whatever may help foster its unity and salvage it.

The sponsors of the Israeli-inspired partitionist project seem to calculate that their unchallenged moves toward fragmenting and partitioning the country and introducing a secessionist fait accompli will have the effect of making the Lebanese and non-Lebanese resign themselves to their crime.

The Lebanese nationalists who value their country's territorial integrity and the coexistance of its diverse communities are rewarding defiance, provocation, and crime with wisdom, reason, goodwill, and a spirit of accommodation to lift the country out of the crisis. Those who have been caught up in the stealthy Israeli project may have thus been emboldened to conclude that they can carry on and even take more audacious steps to

further compromise the country's territorial integrity, national unity, and institutions as well as to seek funds, weapons, and political support from the enemy.

This illusion will, however, remain just that and even turn out to be more illusory than a mirage: The Lebanese nationalists will exhibit only so much patience. There is a red line that the Lebanese nationalists' sacrifices on behalf of saving their country's unity and legitimate institutions will not cross.

If the ongoing public and behind-the-scenes political moves to save Lebanon's national unity, legitimacy, and the national interests of all the Lebanese prove fruitless, it will not be surprising to see the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese talk to the Israeli-backed partitionists in a language suited to the latter's options, methods, and threats. It will serve them right for having sought the help of the enemies of Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabs to harm the country's national interests and those of the helpless and powerless inhabitants of the districts run by the Lebanese stooges of the Israeli project.

Rational, patriotic thinkers with enough vision, residing in the helpless, powerless districts, are supposed to sense the risks carried by the advancing steamroller, which is out to confiscate legitimacy and the freedom of parliamentary deputies, political parties, and blocs and potentially that of the church and the Maronite Patriarchate. The risks cast their shadow beyond these districts to the entirety of Lebanon, its unity, independence, and very survival. These supposedly know that shedding tears over the ruins of a country that they mismanaged will be of no avail.

Their connivance at a crime being perpetrated against them and all that they care about and sanctify such as the entity and the coexistance formula will produce inescapable consequences that will make of them, as they made of others before them, victims of the fascist whale associated with Israel and the rest of the enemies of Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabs.

The bill for the criminal adventure led by the usurpers of authority, partitionists, and the tools of the Israeli project will be footed by the Lebanese, above all by those who allow their names to be associated with foreign-inspired partition. As for the others, they can live and survive. A word uttered or action undertaken now in the interests of saving the unity and survival of Lebanon may spare the need for many a sacrifice in future.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Leader Rejects Zahir Shah Return

PM1810122588 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Oct 88 p 5

[Interview with Ahmad Shah, head of the "provisional Afghan mujahidin government," by Sultan al-Muhanna in Peshawar; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Muhanna] Many elements of the Afghan problem are linked to the Geneva agreement that was signed by the Pakistani Government, the Soviet Union, and the present Afghan Government. What is the impact of that agreement on the jihad, and how do the mujahidin view this accord?

[Shah] As you know, the Geneva agreement did not include the mujahidin. They were not a signatory party to it. Therefore, we do not attach any value or consideration to that agreement. The world knows that in the Afghan problem there are two main parties, namely the Russians and the mujahidin, but the signatories showed no consideration or respect for the mujahidin. We therefore consider it an insult to the mujahidin and the jihad cause.

We told the signatories to the agreement: If you do reach a solution to the problem, how will you apply the solution in practice? But there was no answer. They are now facing a dilemma: The withdrawing units are under attack and fire from the mujahidin. When some people object and ask why we are attacking these units, the answer is obvious: We are not a party to that agreement, whose clauses are anti-mujahidin. Regardless of our opinion of the agreement. [sentence as published] [passage omitted]

[Al-Muhanna] The USSR says Pakistan has violated the Geneva agreement and is supporting the Afghan mujahidin and providing them with many facilities, which is why the USSR will reconsider that agreement. What is your comment?

[Shah] For 10 years they have threatened, as we have heard many times, that the USSR will attack Pakistan if it does not stop helping the mujahidin.

I say the war is continuing. The enemy is known. If they are determined to implement a scheme, they will do so, whether or not we and Pakistan like it. But this does not mean that we should change our course. We have launched the jihad, which means martyrs, injured, mothers grieving for their sons, and many disasters. It is the will of Almighty God, to which we submit. We must continue until Afghanistan is liberated, or accept martyrdom.

[Al-Muhanna] How do you assess Pakistan's position before and after the agreement?

[Shah] The Pakistani Government's positions make it clear that they regret signing the agreement, as they are not satisfied with it. So far the Pakistani Government's position toward the mujahidin and evacuees has been good. We have not sensed any change to date. Pakistan's position at present is similar to its position before the agreement. No change has occurred. [passage omitted]

[Al-Muhanna] The option of King Zahir Shah's return constitutes one of the proposed solutions (before the agreement and in case it fails). Many media services are proposing the king option because of the mujahidin's rejection of the agreement. In fact, they emphasize that some of the mujahidin have agreed to to discuss the king issue. Is this true?

[Shah] No. That subject is closed. The subject of King Zahir Shah and the possibility of his return is not one that we raise. And none of the mujahidin or the people wants King Zahir Shah to return.

The possibility of King Zahir Shah's return is virtually zero. In fact, there is no possibility of his returning. But conspirators are trying to bring back the king and those they call neutrals. There are no neutrals in this battle. We call them hypocrites! What else can we call them? [passage omitted]

[Al-Muhanna] What about the United States and its support for the jihad? Excuse me, but whenever I hear or read reports on the problem I always come across U.S. support for the jihad.

[Shah] Brother, regarding assistance, I have said that the aid we receive from Muslims comes from alms and charity. We have no radio or television station. We have a monthly magazine that we cannot publish regularly. It is our news medium. So how can we express our views?

Another painful thing: The Islamic governments do not help us in this field. For instance, if you go to the hotels in Peshawar, you will find that most reports come from the West, Japan, and China. But you will not see a single Muslim reporter.

The news of the jihad comes from the BBC and VOA. It hurts me to say so, but is that not shameful?

[Al-Muhanna] Eng Ahmad Shah, you still have not clarified the question of U.S. support.

[Shah] Brother, let us look at the history of the jihad. Everyone knows that it began with empty hands. The mujahidin had nothing. They began to equip themselves from captured booty.

In the first year I was in Peshawar, I heard many people saying how amazed they were that the mujahidin were able to resist the Russian invasion. They could not believe anyone could confront the Russian forces, armed to the teeth with advanced weapons.

The first, second, third, and fourth years passed before there was any aid from the United States or any other state. The United States saw that the mujahidin would succeed, because they were ready to sacrifice their lives for that objective.

They know that if Afghan territory falls to the communists, Pakistani territory will fall the following day, and so on to other important areas, and that the United States will lose a great deal as a result. When they pay Pakistan $20, $200, or $2,000 million it is because they want to defend their interests. That is the point of U.S. aid. They are paying now so that they can make gains or avoid losses tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Council of Ministers Message to UN Officials
LD1910085288 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The Afghan Council of Ministers in its session today approved and issued the following message of thanks addressed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and Sadruddin Aga Khan, the special organizer for UN economic and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan:

To UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar:

Your Excellency, the Republic of Afghanistan firmly believes in the lofty and humane aims enshrined in the UN Charter. It has not and will not spare any effort in implementing these aims. Our people are (?tired) of the hardships and sufferings brought by the destructive war.

Our people appreciate Your Excellency's and His Excellency Sadruddin Aga Khan's humanitarian efforts regarding the Geneva accords and will never forget them. We can gladly say that Your Excellency's and His Excellency Sadruddin Aga Khan's humanitarian efforts in attacting economic and humanitarian aid for Afghanistan, as shown in the 12 October meeting of donor countries, have had significant results. This aid can play an important role in the resettlement of refugees and reconstruction of the Afghan economy.

Once again, I would like to express the profound appreciation of the Afghan Government and its people for your humanitarian efforts.

[Signed] Dr Muhammad Hasan Sharq, Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan

Citizens Notified of Reasons for Arrest
LD1810232288 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reports that a number of people who opposed the national reconciliation policy and the Geneva accords and who were engaged in spreading rumors against national security, engaging in sabotage, and spreading fear among the people were arrested in accordance with the law. The case will be investigated by an authoritative state commission.

The citizens are notified that those who engage in activities against the lofty interests of peace in the country and against the Geneva accords, in activities to disrupt public law and order, and in spreading rumors and lies against the public interest will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

Tribes Commission Approves Provincial 'Merger'
LD1810231288 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Excerpt] A full session of the Wolasi Jirgah was held this morning under the chairmanship of Dr Khalil Ahmad 'Abawi. The session discussed a number of internal Wolasi Jirgah issues.

The Nationalities and Tribes Commission of the Wolasi Jirgah also held a session this afternoon. The commission approved the merger of Kapisa, Paktika, and Konarha Provinces with Parvan, Paktia, and Nangarhar Provinces, respectively. The commission also approved the establishment of Nuristan Province and referred their decisions to the Wolasi Jirgah's Secretariat for a final decision. [passage omitted]

Reports on Likely Fall of Qandahar Questioned
LD1810154988 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1330 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] The Western propaganda machinery has recently published various reports on the situation in Qandahar Province, saying that Qandahar will be the first province to fall in the current war and that this will be the greatest victory for the so-called mujahidin.

A correspondent of the BIA military section has prepared a special report in this respect from Qandahar Province and says:

After the signing of the Geneva accords Qandahar Province came under the heaviest of attacks by the extremists and their supporters. During this period, that is, after the withdrawal of the Soviet limited units from Qandahar Province on 5 August, attacks were launched against Qandahar on 15 August, 31 August, and 14 October in

order to gain so-called control of Qandahar city. However, they were confronted by a crushing reply. The losses inflicted on the extremists as a result of retaliatory blows reached hundreds of men.

For example, during the month of Mezan [beginning 22 September] the warmongers lost over 310 men, with another 330 injured. Moreover, as a result of Armed Forces operations, 10 extremist ringleaders—Akhtar Muhammad, Habibollah, Niaz Muhammad, 'Abdul Khaliq, 'Abdul Halim, Haji Muhammad, 'Abdullah Jan [names indistinct], and Fayzel Muhammad—were crushed, and hundreds of enemy weapons were destroyed.

These operations once again prove to the people of this province that the warmongering extremists will never be powerful enough to implement their evil plan to take Qandahar. At present, the overwhelming majority of the members of armed opposition groups are refraining from subversive actions. It is also said that 69 armed groups are not taking part in combat operations. However, Pakistan and Western supporters of the extremists are striving to fan the flames of war in this province.

For this reason, and in order to encourage the groups' members, they have been promised a payment of 100,000 rupees to their families in the event of being killed in the war; 20,000 rupees for injuries received; and the supporters are prepared to pay 1,000 afghanis per day for taking part in the war.

The dispatch of weapons and ammunition from Pakistan to Qandahar Province continued. [passage indistinct] About 500 Pakistani militias have taken part in the subversive activities in the Spin Buldak and Shar-e Safa Districts. At present 24 Pakistani military advisers—six in [placename indistinct] district; four in Daman District; three in Panjwai; six in Arghandab; two in Shawalikowt; and two in [placename indistinct] districts are operating. Among these advisers we can name (Koshk-e Jawadi) and (Koshk-e Sulayman).

The report, quoting (Sultanjan), an elder of Qandahar city, adds: Most people in Qandahar Province demand peace and calm in the province. The war is dragging Qandahar to destruction, which is no longer bearable by the people of this province, (Sultanjan) says. He said: We ask Pakistan and other Western countries to stop their interference in our country's affairs so that we can heal the wounds caused by the war.

23 Rockets Hit Jalalabad 16 Oct; 3 Killed

LD1810081988 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Kabul, Oct. 17, BAKHTAR—Three persons were killed and five others including children and women were wounded in Jalalabad city due to 23 surface-to-surface rockets fired by extremists on October 16 on the residential areas in precincts one, two and three of that city. A number of residential houses were also partially damaged.

The Armed Forces in Nangarhar Province inflicted a reciprocal rebuff to the extremist elements as a result of which two extremists were killed and one wounded. As also, a large quantity of arms and munitions of the enemies fell at the hand of the Armed Forces.

Differences, Feuds Intensify Among 'Extremists'

LD1810083088 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Kabul, Oct. 17, BAKHTAR—Differences and feuds are growing among extremists. As per reports reaching here indicate upon the instruction of Gulbuddin leader of the so-called Islamic Party which was made at the gathering of the ring leaders of that party to fire one hundred rockets each day on Qandahar city has faced up with crude reply of non-obedience. [sentence as received]

Two participants at the gathering namely Sayfullah and Haji Azimuddin [names as received] while opposing the instruction were said that they would obey the instruction provided that Gulbuddin's family be settled in Qandahar city.

Reports quote them as saying that they will not fire rockets on residential houses any longer.

Meanwhile, Husayn Anwari [name as received] one of the leaders of Harakat-e Islami Meli, rejected the Utopian government of "Mujahidin" replying a question raised by a German journalist in a press conference held in Peshawar recently.

According to him the interests of Shi'te religious sect will be trampled down if Peshawar-based government is created. Since, such a government can not serve the rights and interests of nationalities residing in Afghanistan and does not have the right to represent the people of Afghanistan so he rejected it.

Mujahidin Liberate Chowkay Area in Konarha

BK1810024488 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say the mujahidin have liberated the Chowkay area of Konarha Province, which was the only area that had remained under the control of the Kabul regime until now.

Earlier, when the mujahidin captured the Chaga Serai area, the Kabul regime officers, soldiers, and other communists had taken refuge at Chowkay. Now they have shifted to Jalalabad where they are living in camps.

Meanwhile, at a meeting in Chaga Serai, the mujahidin have discussed matters relating to the defense and the administrative structure of the province, and ways to intensify operations against the Kabul regime.

Rebels Capture Barracks in Badakhshan

BK1810150488 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] According to a report, the mujahidin in Afghanistan have achieved more successes against the forces of the Soviet-assisted Kabul regime and have captured several military barracks, including the Baharak barracks in Badakhshan Province.

According to a report received today, the mujahidin captured the barracks after 12 hours of fighting, thereby bringing the entire district under the control of the mujahidin. The defending forces, which surrendered to the mujahidin, carried weapons including 2 heavy machineguns, 9 tanks, vehicles for carrying troops, and 21 wireless sets.

Last Sunday [16 October], a commander of the Kabul militia, (Kabir Zayd Muhammad), surrendered to the mujahidin along with 35 soldiers in the Bagram region of Parvan Province.

Bangladesh

Pakistan Lends Money for Purchase of Sugar Plant

BK1610140588 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Text] Pakistan is to provide Bangladesh a soft-term credit of $13.86 million to buy a sugar plant. Planning Minister A.K. Khandakar and Pakistan's Planning and Commerce Minister Dr Mahbubul Haq signed the agreed minutes to this effect in Islamabad on Friday [14 October].

Under the agreement, Pakistan will supply 100,000 tons of cement to Bangladesh on the basis of international price and quality. They have also agreed to set up joint commission on jute, tea, textile, and other items.

Both sides agreed to further enhance and diversify the trade and facilitate visits of businessmen and industrialists.

Another agreement was also signed by the two sides in which Pakistan will provide Bangladesh $50 million loan to buy machinery and equipment and other engineering products.

India

Conference on Cooperation With USSR Begins

BK1810161888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] A 4-day conference on India-USSR friendship and cooperation began in New Delhi this evening. It will identify and discuss new avenues to increase mutual cooperation.

Inaugurating it, the Soviet minister for culture, Mr Zakharov, said the Soviet people want to know as much as possible about India to understand their lifestyle better. Referring to the festivals of the two countries, he said the cultural point of the two nations can be used for further strengthening their friendship and cooperation. The minister for human resource development, Mr Shiv Shankar, presided over the conference.

In his message to the conference, the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, said the friendship between the two countries continues to grow in strength on the basis of mutual respect.

The Soviet prime minister, Mr Ryzhkov, in his message said the two countries have been consistently working to ensure radical changes toward betterment of world affairs to give the people peace, security and progress.

PATRIOT Views Gandhi's Visit to China

BK1610103088 Delhi PATRIOT in English 5 Oct 88 p 4

[Article by Saral Patra: "Implications of China Visit"]

[Text] Dates are not so important but the fact of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's decision to visit China is. The first report of 12 December being the take off date has been discounted. The official view is that the exact date of the Prime Minister's departure for Beijing will be decided according to the suitability of time and circumstances.

Granted official visits are not decided after consultations with astrologers or made subject to the injunctions of the Hindu Panchan—the position of stars, moon, earth's proximity to certain planets, etc.

But the decision to make the trip in December endows it with certain features which need proper consideration. Beijing and most part of northern China will be enveloped in a thick blanket of snow. There will be less opportunity to taking long journeys for sight-seeing.

In other words, the five days or so in China will be hectic. The programme will be packed with talks at different levels—from the highest to the lowest officials.

The three-member high-powered delegation's scheduled visit is to take a look at the way the Chinese propose to arrange the programme. The most important for the international media will be the schedule of meetings, whom the Indian Prime Minister meets first, and the nature of the meetings—formal, informal, courtesy calls, a full-scale exchange of views along with the respective aides, as also sectional meetings at the level of senior officials for the purpose of improving bilateral trade, cultural exchanges, cooperation in respect of science and technology, etc.

However, even before any firm decision on the proposed visit by Mr Rajiv Gandhi had been taken, a well-known group of China watchers, as also BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader Atal Behari Vajpayee, have demanded its abandonment.

Some of them feel that the Prime Minister, without sufficient experience in handling such complicated issues that impinge upon the very sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, would be prone to softening up before Chinese blandishments.

The hard-headed calculating leaders of the present Beijing Government may not even let Mr Gandhi have his—India's—point of view recorded during the high-level meetings. They have expressed in no uncertain terms that the main purpose of the Prime Minister's visit would be to work out the modalities of handing over the Chinese-occupied Indian territories in Ladakh and securing the release of Indian territories in north-east now in China's possession.

Such a contention might be described by some others as overshooting without taking into account the ground conditions. The border issue, even after eight rounds of official-level talks, remains as intractable as it was 26 years ago when the Chinese mounted a large-scale armed attack against India on 20 October 1962.

More than a quarter century has elapsed since that blackest day in India-China relations. The interregnum has been used by political interests on both sides to aggravate the situation and push the once friendly relations to the nadir of animosity, so that no retrieval would be possible for another couple of centuries.

The fallacy of following that type of political attitude is obvious. No country today accepts that adverse international relations cannot be altered for the better, that they are so constituted as not to yield any positive indication at all for improvement.

At least that does not appear to be the view of Beijing, nor is New Delhi given to melancholia in the midst of its efforts to acquire a position of pre-eminence in the leadership of the Nonaligned Movement. Every move to improve relations with countries that influence India's policies one or the other will go to further such efforts.

However, the Prime Minister has categorically stated that his proposed China visit did not involve the ceding of any piece of Indian territory. This announcement came after his visit to Bhutan where, among other things, he discussed with the King the outcome of the latter's talks with the Chinese on the demarcation of the Sino-Bhutanese border.

China had issued a statement on 15 May, after the first round of Sino-Bhutanese talks, emphasising the need for "accommodating the national sentiments of the two peoples and the national interests of the two coudntries".

Mr Gandhi's response to such an open signal came in his speech on 11 June while visiting Hungary. He said in Budapest: "We want friendly relations with China. We want peace on our borders. We stand ready for a settlement of our border dispute through peaceful negotiations which takes into account the national interests of both sides."

Further contacts between the two countries have helped the Government of India decide that it was time now to send its Prime Minister to China for having an idea of the Chinese thinking on matters that closely affect each other's national interests.

It is not a comprehensive, all-embracing India-China relationship that is considered necessary; but a modicum of understanding capable of accommodating short term disagreements which do not militate against the accepted policies of either side.

It is in this context that one has also to take note of India's close relationships with the Soviet Union as also with Vietnam, both of which at one stage had become anathema to Chinese policy-makers.

Today, Sino-Soviet relations are going through a process of mutual efforts for normalisation. In the case of Vietnam, even without withdrawing its "right to teach it a lesson", Beijing has conceded an important role to Hanoi in the resolution of the seemingly intractable problem of securing peace in Kampuchea.

It would, thus, appear that these friendly relations with the Soviet Union and Vietnam, as also the Indian recognition of the Heng Samrin Government in Kampuchea, might not be considered as hurdles in the way of improving Sino-Indian relations. In many ways, the Indian position in regard to peace in Indochina coincides with that of China.

Besides, Beijing is also aware that India's nonaligned affiliation is positively viewed in Indonesia and some other countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

With Thailand showing signs of disenchantment with the discredited Pol Pot outfit, and Prince Norodom Sihanouk trying to totally dissociate himself from the Democratic Kampuchea establishment, Beijing too appears to be interested in a settlement in Kampuchea even if with some major concessions.

India could, therefore, be useful in hammering out a solution since it has close contacts with the Prince, Phnom Penh as also Hanoi, apart from the ASEAN.

Reports have it that Soviet President Gorbachev would have a detailed exchange of views with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi when the former visits New Delhi in November to receive the Indira Gandhi Award for International Understanding.

Obviously, the main topic would be the Soviet leader's latest proposals on ensuring peace and security in the Asia-Pacific Region, the proposals envisage a vital role for China in this endeavour.

Mr Gandhi has already described the proposals as positive, although beset with several hurdles in the way of their implementation. China has, however, withheld its comment on the proposals. Beijing will no doubt get a first-hand Indian reaction to the Soviet proposals when Mr Gandhi visits the Chinese capital. India will surely like to make its due contribution in furthering the concept of all-in cooperation to uphold peace and tranquillity in the region.

An exploration of the possibilities at the highest level, when an opportunity has arisen, must not be missed. This is how a system of mutual understanding and confidence can be built up and contribute to the well being of the peoples of the two countries.

'About 200' Injured in Clashes in Kerala

BK1810035288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] In Kerala about 200 people, including some policemen, were injured when police resorted to lathi [baton] charge in Calicut yesterday to disperse two clashing groups.

Violence broke out when the workers of the Indian Union Muslim League, IUML, and the Students Federation of India, SSI, allegedly attacked each other during demonstrations.

The IUML workers were taking out a procession against an alleged partisan attitude of the state police in the violent incident in Nadapuram. The SSI volunteers were also taking out a procession in the city.

The Muslim League leaders—Mr B.B. Abdullah Koya, MP; and ex-minister Mr U.A. Beeran—were among those who received injuries.

6 Taiwanese Trawlers, 175 Crewmen Held

BK1910035888 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Six Taiwanese trawlers, along with 175 crew members, have been apprehended by the Coast Guard off the Porbander Coast. The trawlers were poaching in the exclusive economic zone of India. Commander S.S. Paul of the Coast Guard spoke to Doordarshan News about their poaching activities:

[Begin recording] These are Japanese trawlers with Taiwanese registration and have Taiwanese crew. These trawlers have capacity to carry a lot of fish and they were fishing for tuna in our seas.

These trawlers deliver their goods at Singapore after they have finished their catch and they have a capacity to take in at least 300 tons of fish. [end recording]

Iran

Prime Minister Musavi's Letter of Resignation

WA1810201288 London KEYHAN in Persian 6 Oct 88 p 12

['Text' of Prime Minister Musavi's letter of resignation to President 'Ali Khamene'i on 5 September]

[Text] In the name of the Almighty.
Esteemed President:
I did not state the reasons for my resignation in the copy I sent to the media because I did not want the enemies of Islam and country to take advantage of them. In the hope that mentioning them, God willing, will be beneficial to our country and the future government, I will summarize them very briefly.

1. The loss of the government's authority in foreign policy: Today, the affairs of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon are in your hands. Letters are addressed to other governments without the knowledge of the [Iranian] government. I, as prime minister, do not know anything about these letters other than in exceptional cases and by accident.

The distinguished Japanese prime minister writes letters to the esteemed speaker of the Majlis who responds, and I find out about the matter and the content in an official ceremony!

Mr Larijani says somewhere that contacts are being made with the United States through five channels while I, as head of the cabinet, am unaware of these channels!

The government which is supposed to be in charge of foreign policy, which is talked about all across the nation, is not informed about foreign policy.

2. External operations taking place without our knowledge and without our orders: You know how damaging the effect of these actions have been for our country. Only after an airplane is hijacked are we informed. Only when a machinegun opens fire in one of the streets of Lebanon and the sound of it echoes everywhere do we find out about the incident. Only after explosives are discovered in the possession of our pilgrims in Jeddah do I find out about it. Unfortunately, and in spite of the damages and harm caused by these actions to the country, such operations can take place at any time, at any hour in the name of the government.

3. The separation of the Plan and Budget organization from the Prime Minister's Office: This action, politically motivated, was damaging from the beginning and will continue to be disastrous for the country's reconstruction. Unfortunately, this problem and the problem of the

Council of Ministers, in spite of being referred to the Expediency and Discernment Council [shora-ye tashkhis-e maslehat], were delayed and not solved, although this is the right of the Expediency and Discernment Council and I do not have any expectations.

4. The breakup of the government's legal powers and responsibilities of the government, as well as those of the ministers through various councils.

5. Lack of authority on my part to respond to the cabinet and to the members of the Majlis regarding actions performed in the name of the government but without the government's knowledge.

Finally, I find it necessary to say that my resignation, I take refuge in God, is not due to wrath directed at the Islamic Republic government and system and its revolutionary officials. Even if it were so, considering the greatness of the revolution and the insignificance of my being, it would not have any effect on the growing trend and expansion of the Islamic revolution. This resignation is due only to my inability to work under these circumstances and it is only because of this impotence that I give up my duties.

[Signed] Mir Hoseyn Musavi, Prime Minister, 14/6/67 [5 September 1988]

President Khamene'i Responds

WA1810204788 London KEYHAN in Persian 6 Oct 88 p 12

[Text] In the name of the Almighty.
Dear Brother Mr Musavi:
Greetings. I received your letter of resignation and I feel I need to remind you of several matters:

1. In the present delicate situation and while the Geneva discussions are underway, it is necessary that we all stand ready in the face of conspiriacies of the enemies and be free from internal problems. The resignation of the government is against the interests of the country and the revolution and a blow to the Islamic Republic system.

2. The difficulty of selecting a few ministers is not a new one. During the last few years (during my second Presidency), this difficulty was consistently solved by the wisdom of the three-man council appointed by the imam. You consistently welcomed it. Presently, close to half of the ministers of the government who were not acceptable to me are in power by the command of that council. Today also, the same council, which thanks to the imam remains strong, will be the source of the solution.

3. If you believe the Majlis to be the real authority, you should not deny the presentation of the government to the Majlis and the request for a vote of confidence. If the Majlis does not vote for the government, there are [other] legal ways for forming a new government. This is better than resigning the night before the government is to be presented to the Majlis and publishing it [the resignation] in the newspapers.

4. You have enjoyed the rights of the office of the prime minister fully according to Article 124 of the Constitution, and have even enjoyed, thanks to the imam, constant protection so that the government could fulfill its duties. You have gained powers beyond those assigned in the constitution and have used them. I will attach an explanation of this matter in a letter addressed personally to you.

5. You know that I have always supported you in spite of some differences of opinion with you in matters of the country's administration and in spite of some objections to your methods, particularly regarding economic issues. I do not feel your resignation is a wise decision. Insisting on it is a blow to the system and even, I am sorry to say, treason, of course unintentional treason. I know and I am of the opinion that you should accept the imam's views on economic issues in total. I will not accept the resignation and I beg you not to insist.

[Signed] Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, President

Copies to:
Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni, Office of the Imam
Ayatollah Musavi-Ardabili, President of the Supreme Judicial Council
Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Speaker of the Majlis

Majlis Speaker on Acquiring Chemical Weapons

LD1910135288 Tehran IRNA in English 1345 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 19, IRNA—Iran's acting Armed Forces commander-in-chief Wednesday again spoke of the need for further coordination between the Army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps but said the two should remain separate.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani also said the Islamic Republic should at least "consider" adding chemical and biological weapons to its arsenal.

Speaking at a seminar organized for the Ground Forces commanders, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said efforts are currently underway to "mix" the Army and the IRGC.

"(But) there would only be mergers (between the two) in sectors related to (defence) industries and non-essential matters and as a whole there would be two forces," he said.

The Majlis, chaired by Hashemi-Rafsanjani, recently postponed for six months deliberations on a bill merging the Defence and IRGC Ministries.

The issue was raised shortly before Iran's Acceptance of U.N. Ceasefire Resolution 598 and since then various leading officials have expressed views on partial or total merger.

"The existence of the corps is a serious reality," the acting Armed Forces commander said. "These two forces should complement one another. Competition between them is unbearable and the forces themselves must not accept this."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said Iran must overcome its military weaknesses, including in the area of chemical weapons.

"Chemical and biological weapons are poor man's atomic bombs and can easily be produced. We should at least consider them for our defence," he said.

During the war, particularly in the last four years, Iranian forces suffered thousands of casualties in numerous and extensive Iraqi chemical attacks.

Despite evidence of such use gathered by a number of fact-finding missions, the United Nations failed to strongly condemn Iraq and refrained from taking measures to stop their further use, banned by international law.

"Although the use of such weapons is inhuman, the war taught us that international laws are only drops of ink on paper," Hashemi-Rafsanjani said.

Majlis Speaker's News Conference in Bakhtaran

LD1810174088 Tehran IRNA in English 1721 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Bakhtaran, Oct. 18, IRNA—Acting Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday said the Baghdad regime is highly unlikely to risk resuming the war after suffering the grave consequences of its nearly 8-year-old aggression against Iran.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, also Majlis (Parliament) speaker, cautioned "We should always bear in mind that our enemy has, more or less, the same past motives for waging a war."

The Majlis speaker, referring to the "no peace no war" situation and the likelihood of resumption of war by the Iraqi Ba'thist regime, noted the Iranian Armed Forces enjoy high combat prowess.

Addressing a press conference in this western provincial capital, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the combat readiness of Iran's Armed Forces has been noticeably enhanced over the past few months. "If our current position is made known to our enemies, it will scare them away from war and will bring us closer to peace," he added.

In a separate address to a group of local IRGC commanders here the same day, Hashemi-Rafsanjani described as "nonsense" the Baghdad regime's claim that it was planning to divert the course of the Arvand River.

He said the Baghdad regime, following its failure to gain sovereignty over the Arvand River, was indulging in such ballyhoo in order to find something to say to its people.

The acting Armed Forces commander-in-chief pointed out that the Iraqi regime does not have the necessary technology for changing the course of the Arvand River, which forms the southernmost border of the two countries.

Views Reconstruction, Defense

LD1810121988 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Excerpts] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the speaker of the Islamic Majlis and the acting commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, in conclusion of his 3-day visit to the country's western provinces, answered the questions raised on the outcome of this visit in an interview with our correspondent. We begin the news reports of this bulletin by broadcasting this interview.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, you have visited the Ilam and Bakhtaran Provinces during the past 3 days. Could you please explain your own objective and how do you evaluate the morale of the people and the situation of these two provinces?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. My trips had two objectives: One was to inspect the fronts in order to review the situation of our combatants and the defense lines; and the second objective was to appear among the people of the war-stricken region and those provinces which during the imposed war demonstrated their courage and devotion, tolerated hardship, and offered many services to the revolution, to the war, and to the defense. I wanted to appear among the people and to thank them. [passage omitted] At present we are neither in a state of war nor peace. We must certainly talk about military issues, because the probability of a resumption of the war exists. We must not forget that our enemy might have the same past motives. However, the enemy will not easily welcome the danger of resuming the war, because of the situation it encountered, but the possibility exists.

With regard to the reconstruction policy, although all the issues are not clear to us yet, we discussed some general issues with the people. However, it is necessary to continue the discussion. We should discuss details and make plans. We shall raise these issues with the people gradually and through the responsible officials. We spent some time meeting our Army, Guards, and combatant brothers. This took place during the trip to the front.

[Correspondent] Yesterday, the first social and cultural expansion program of the Islamic Republic was approved by the Majlis. In view of the basic points of the various (?parts) of this bill, what effect will it have on the program of reconstruction in the western regions?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] You Know that this program is not a short- term policy. This is a 5-year plan. During the first round of debate the policies, objectives, and methodology were approved. But the program on the quantitative discussion of these issues has not been raised yet, it will be raised in the second round of debate. Naturally, in view of what exists here, in the western region and the war-stricken areas—in accordance with the policies approved and supported by the imam and high-ranking officials—priority will be given to the western regions and the areas damaged by the war. I think that such provinces as Khuzestan, Ilam, Bakhtaran, and Kordestan will mainly have priority. The 5-year plan, however, is more comprehensive.

[Correspondent] One of the issues raised by your excellency in your meetings with the people was the possibility of renewed military aggression by the Iraqi Ba'thist regime. Has Iran thought of some measures to confront such aggression, and basically what is the combat capability of our country's fighting forces?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Fortunately, our combat capability is very good. As far as I gathered from my talks with the forces, they have made good use of this period and have improved their training. They arrange good exercises and maneuvers. The war materiel, for which we sometimes faced limitations during operations, has been prepared relatively well during these several months.

We have recently acquired a device [vasileh] that we hope will (? deter) the enemy from resuming the war of the cities. We hope that in view of this device, the enemy will not resume the war of the cities even if clashes were to occur. Overall, I think that if our preparedness is known by our enemies, this will to some extent deter them from the war and will bring us closer to peace. [end recording]

Reyshahri on Possible Amnesty for 'Deceived'
LD1910053888 Tehran IRNA in English 0525 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Sanandaj, Kurdestan Prov., Oct. 19, IRNA—The minister of information Tuesday [18 October] announced that members of outlawed grouplets might be pardoned throughout the country provided political leaders endorse the amnesty measures proposed by the ministry's experts and Security Council after detailed deliberations.

However, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshahri added if any pardoned culprit commits mischievious acts after the general amnesty, decisive measures will be taken against them.

Speaking to reporters, the minister said global arrogance has switched to long-term plots to achieve its evil aims after Iran accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 (July 18).

But Iran's ever-alert intelligence, said Hoj. Reyshahri is always there to foil any plot hatched by the enemy.

The minister said the misled outlaws are surrendering in multitudes, an act which, he noted, is an evidence of their sufferings and wretchedness. "They have found out their corrupt leaders are engrossed in a life of wanton pleasure," he said adding the misled members are merely playthings for their so-called leaders.

Hoj. Reyshahri further warned that the Islamic Republic deals forcefully and decisively with infidels, global arrogance agents and criminals. But, he added, "we extend Islamic kindness and grace to the deceived."

He concluded by exhorting the deceived to return to the Islamic fold, the sooner the better.

Commerce Ministry Chief Receives PRC Minister
LD1810164288 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 18, IRNA—Visiting Chinese Light Industries Minister Zheng Xianlin in a meeting with official in charge of commerce ministry Abdolhoseyn Vahaji Tuesday called for the expansion of Tehran-Beijing trade ties.

In response, Vahaji stressing Iran-China relations in all fields, said the Islamic Republic would secure part of its needs from China as it did in the past.

For its part, China can buy a variety of Iranian non-oil goods, added Vahaji. He called upon the two countries' experts to study export of Iran's non-oil goods to China. The Chinese minister arrived here yesterday at the head of a delegation.

Musavi-Ardebili Meets With Lebanese Delegation
LD1810113188 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Lebanese Hezbollah members were today received by Musavi-Ardebili, the chief justice. Reports on recent developments in Lebanon were presented to Musavi-Ardebili, who emphasized the need for unity among Muslims in their confrontion with the Zionist regime occupying Jerusalem, conspiracies aimed at partitioning Lebanon, and various plots hatched against Muslims.

Karrubi Welcomes GDR Parliamentary Delegation
LD1810182988 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] We have a report in connection with the visit to Tehran by the GDR first parliamentary secretary.

Gerald Goetting, GDR first parliamentary secretary, arrived in Tehran this afternoon at the head of a political-parliamentary delegation. He was welcomed by Deputy Majlis Speaker Karrubi. The first secretary commented on the aims of his visit:

This visit takes place on the basis of an invitation by the Majlis speaker. We will discuss the expansion of parliamentary relations between the two countries. He added that various international and regional issues and bilateral relations will also be discussed.

Deputy Majlis Speaker Karrubi said in an interview that the GDR parliamentary secretary's visit takes place at the highest level. This provides a suitable background for the expansion of political, economic, and parliamentary ties between the two countries.

Khamene'i Receives Departing Swedish Envoy
LD1810152288 Tehran IRNA in English 1514 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 18, IRNA—Outgoing Swedish Ambassador Bo Henrikson bade farewell to President 'Ali Khamene'i Tuesday.

Addressing Henrikson, President Khamene'i said that his tenure in Iran had coincided with one of the most eventful and crucial periods in the history of Iranian Muslims who, he said, have emerged successful from the ordeal.

The president, referring to the trend of Iran-Iraq peace talks, reiterated "the exact implementation of U.N. Resolution 598 is the only way which will lead to peace." Unfortunately, the Baghdad regime does not believe in this issue and is sabotaging the peace negotiations, he regretted.

Khamene'i also urged international circles and peace-loving governments in the world to put pressure on Iraq.

Towards the end of the meeting, wishing Henrikson success, he called for multilateral expansion of Tehran-Stockholm ties.

Hungarian Premier Grosz To Visit 25-27 Oct
LD1810114088 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Mr Karoly Grosz, general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party and premier of the Hungarian People's Republic, will pay an official visit to our country from 25 to 27 October, in response to Mr Musavi's official invitation.

Border Commission With Pakistan Meets 18 Oct
LD1810180888 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Zahedan (Baluchestan va Sistan Prov.), Oct. 18, IRNA—The first session of Iran-Pakistan Joint Border Commission was held here Tuesday during which the two countries' officials discussed mutual cooperation as regards the guarding of common borders.

The two sides also took decisions on controlling movement of freebooters as well as extradition of criminals and drug traffickers.

Meanwhile, the governor general of Baluchestan va Sistan Province Mahmud Ashja' agreed to the Pakistani delegation's proposal for linking Zahedan to that country's passenger train network.

The Pakistani delegation arrived here Monday to attend the second meeting of the Iran-Pakistan Joint Border Commission.

Iraq Mounts Chemical Attacks on Kurds; 47 Killed
LD1810212688 Tehran IRNA in English 1854 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Damascus, Oct. 18, IRNA—More than 47 Iraqi Kurds—mainly women and children—were martyred in an Iraqi chemical attack on Jamirizan region in northern Iraq a few days ago, according to a statement released by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) here today.

The statement said that Iraqi warplanes dropped chemical bombs on three villages near Kirkuk and on Jamirizan region twice in the past ten days.

It also called on international organizations to dispatch expert teams to the chemically bombed areas in northern Iraq to probe the Baghdad regime's renewed use of toxic gases and file report on the heart-rending status of Iraqi Kurds.

PUK is one of the major Kurdish opposition groups fighting the Ba'thist regime ruling Iraq.

Number of Kurdish Refugees Reaches 35,373
LD1810164388 Tehran IRNA in English
1635 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Orumiyeh, W. Azarbaijan Prov., Oct. 18, IRNA—With the arrival of fresh groups of Iraqi refugees in this western province the number of Iraqi Kurds who have sought asylum in Iran, following the August 20 ceasefire in the Iraqi war, has increased to 35,373.

An official of the Governor General's Office announcing the above said issues and problems of the refugees are being handled by the Ministry of Interior.

Cabinet Ministers Defend Achievements
46400013 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian
13 Sep 88 pp 6, 14

[Text] The public session of the Majlis convened yesterday to study the request for a vote of confidence for the members of the cabinet, chaired by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani. During this session, the ministers of interior, the Revolution Guards, agriculture, labor and social affairs, heavy industries, health care and medical training, petroleum, housing and urban development, education and training, Islamic culture and guidance, culture and higher education, economic affairs and finance, as well as industries defended the government's achievements. A detailed report on the speeches by the cabinet ministers is presented for our dear readers below:

Remarks by the Minister of Interior

Defending the operations of the policies of this ministry, Minister of Interior Mohtashemi discussed existing problems, measures which have been taken, and ways of accomplishing tasks in the Ministry of Interior.

Thanking the opponents and the supporters, whose comments concerning the Ministry of Interior's accomplishments provided a context for the discussion, he began by saying: The rules of management provided for the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Constitution is such that the nation's power is distributed and each official's limits of authority has been specified. The existence of respected positions such as the president of the Republic, the prime minister, the Majlis and the Council of Guardians shows such thinking in the expert organizations during the early stages of the revolution. The existence of such sensitivity on the part of the great experts is the result of study and experience gained from the entire history of Iran.

He added: The Constitution has dealt with the element of power in such a way that there never will be idolatry or a shah in this nation again. The primary decision-maker will be the oppressed and deprived people and none other. However, a point worth noting in the context of accomplishing and advancing heavy executive responsibilities is that officials at every level must be given power in accordance with the range of their responsibilities; otherwise, the management of the Government of the Islamic Republic will be faced with endless problems.

The minister of interior then explained that one of the policies of the Ministry of Interior is the belief in intense coordination and cooperation with all competent officials in the government. He said: The Ministry of Interior, as authorized, is the main connection for implementing all the government's economic, industrial, and cultural policies in every corner of the country. This bond and link could be made even stronger under conditions when the best use is made of everyone who is in power and planning positions, and if they are used for the purpose of achieving the exalted aims of the Government of the Islamic Republic, which naturally are implemented by the government.

Noting that the Ministry of Interior has always tried to maintain unity and solidarity throughout the country, he said: We have tried to create as much unity and solidarity throughout the country as possible, to reduce differences and to stop letters to the editor and editorials in the newspapers that were sometimes used by the nation's officials to defend themselves. This created a calm and a desirable atmosphere for the Government of the Islamic Republic and was a very effective aid in minimizing conflict in all the nation's management systems, including industry, the economy, agriculture, and most important, the management of the war, so that they could proceed confidently with planning for the nation's vital and fundamental tasks.

Mr Mohtashemi then discussed the fact that the Ministry of Interior conducted the election for the Third Majlis with a view to the leader's emphasis on keeping to the appointed time. He said: Some of the respected government officials, due to the special circumstances brought about by the enemy's bestial attacks, were hesitant about holding the elections as scheduled. This issue was even brought before the imam, but the imam said the elections must be held as scheduled.

He then mentioned the country's special circumstances and in particlar the problems arising from the Ba'thists regime's savage attacks on residential areas during the elections. He said: Under those conditions, half the country was under a hail of bullets from the Iraqi regime and our foreign enemies, the superpowers, the political circles, the political parties and the dependent mini-groups were trying to prevent the elections from being held to prove that the government of the Islami Republic is not stable and cannot maintain security. With the strength and capability we had in the executive powers and with prudent planning, we held the elections.

He then asked: Where else in the world, with all the implements and tools they employ, and with all their security forces, could they, under such conditions, hold

unified elections on a previously announced day without the occurance of an incident involving security?

Mr Mohtashemi added: Unfortunately, on the eve of the elections, knowingly or unknowingly, certain circles brought accusations against the Ministry of Interior. Unfortunately, this is continuing, and I hope the dear brothers will see their mistake.

The Minister of Interior also noted: All of those involved in conducting the elections were constantly mindful of the sacred position of the Majlis, and their efforts and actions show the deep belief in the government and the officials of the Ministry of Interior who serve in this sacred legislative body.

Continuing, he explained: The sensitivity of the Ministry of the Interior for the soundness of the elections and following the guidance of his holiness the imam has authorized us to stop intervention by officials in any form. He said: Following his holiness the imam's prohibition on interference in the elections by the respected Friday imams, the Ministry of Interior has firmly told the governors general, the governors, and the lieutenant governors not to deviate from their legal responsibilities.

The minister of interior also noted: Despite the fact that the law indicates that officials wishing to become candidates for the Majlis must resign two months in advance, we have issued guidelines to the governors general, the governors, the lieutenant governors, and even the mayors that if they wish to become candidates they must resign six months in advance.

Mr Mohtashemi then discussed the importance of preserving internal security. He said: The active role played by the police at the country's western borders has minimized the possibility of provocations from the counterrevolution. One can say that before Operation Mersad, we did not have an acute domestic security problem in the cities, and with the implementation of the security project on the nation's southeastern borders, and the assignment of the brothers of the Islamic revolutionary komiteh to this strip of the border, we have had much success in eliminating networks of insurgents and smugglers.

He added: We have also approved a project for the security and protection of important individuals. This project was implemented ona wide scale throughout the country. At first there were disagreements, but fortunately, during these three years we have not had any attacks on our prominent officials. If this project is implemented in a desirable way, security for our these officials may be raised to a very high level, without causing criticism or controversy in the country. We have many projects like this for the sensitive and vital areas which have been approved and implemented, such as our projects for fighting the counterrevolutionary minigroups within the country, the extensive and comprehensive project for controlling the nation's critical areas and establishing police forces there which has multiplied the power against the mini-groups by several times.

Moreover, in the year 1365-1366 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987], as well as the current year, we arrested many networks of minigroups through the implementation of this plan. With the very valuable and abundant intelligence we have obtained through the police forces, and by compiling this intelligence and making it available to the Ministry of Intelligence, we have been able to solve many difficult problems.

The minister of interior added: Another of our problems dealt with the Islamic revolutionary komitehs. The brothers and sisters realize that in the year 1363 [21 March 1984-20 March 1985] there were rumblings about dissolving the Islamic revolutionary komitehs and that there were various problems in the komitehs. Our efforts and beliefs, however, were aimed at having the forces and children of the revolution remain for the revolution. We therefore made a fundamental change in the sacred form of the Islamic revolutionary komitehs, and we carried out a comprehensive purge of unsuitable persons, and in that very first year or two, more than 1,000 person who did not fit into the Islamic komitehs were purged, and new active forces were added to these organizations.

Now, with motivated, committed and active management, the sacred sapling of the Islamic revolutionary komitehs has matured and is praised by all the officials and organizations and by the great leader himself. Our great imam, the successor to the leadership, and other officials decided that the prominent and vital role of the komitehs should be played by those brothers and sisters at the fronts, particularly in the successful Operation Mersad, along with the Revolution Guards and the mobilization.

The active military role of the Gendarmerie and the Islamic revolutionary komitehs in the war and in supporting the Revolution Guards and the Army, particularly when the mobilization units and the dear Revolution Guards were in terribly oppressive conditions, is fully acknowledged. The cooperation between the police forces, the Revolution Guards and the mobilization units has not been confined to the war. It is taking place in the provincial security councils and the national security council at the coordination center in an extensive and complete way. The Ministry of Interior has great belief and hope in the powerful role of the Revolution Guards and the mobilization units in the future of the government and the revolution.

I will use this opportunity to say here that we support strengthening the revolutionary organizations, especially the Revolution Guards and the mobilization units, because they have played and will continue to play a determining role in the imam's line and in perpetuating the Islamic revolution. The people who are trying to sir up trouble and confuse the pure minds of the oppressed members of the mobilization and the brave Revolution

Guards concerning the officials and the hardworking government are actually working for the policies of the enemies of the government and the Islamic revolution. We must all realize that as long as the brave Revolution Guards and the heroic members of the mobilization are in the hands of the nation's respected officials, and as long as they are political and concerned about the country, this nation will not play in to the hands of criminal America.

Mr Mohtashemi discussed dealing with the problems in the Jamshid District. He said: The Ministry of Interior took the responsibility of dealing with them at a time when many organizations should have been working with us. Unfortunately, the dear brothers who were expected to do this not only did not ease our load, but they caused problems for us, and instead of helping us they questioned the entire revolutionary plan for dealing with Jamshid because of trivial and incidental matters. It is natural that any major and groundbreaking operation will have side effects that must be approached in the best way.

The minister of interior then discussed the Val 'Adiyat narcotics project. He said: This project began with the establishment of field stations by the Islamic revolutionary komitehs in the provinces of Kerman, Khorasan, and Baluchestan va Sistan, and with the dispatch of extensive forces.

He added: Every one knows that the problem of narcotics cannot be solved by military methods alone, it also needs cultural and judicial action.

Praise God, the respected Council on Narcotics-Related Judicial Affairs reached good conclusions, and I think that if the laws that were approved by the council are put in the hands of the judiciary and enforced there, in one to two months our forces would be able to arrest all or almost all of the principals in narcotics distribution throughout the country and turn them over to the courts. If the same ones who are now in prison are tried and executed, naturally it would have the effect desired throughout the country.

The minister of the interior then discussed the enforcement of the Political Parties Law. He said: The Political Parties Law was enforced in the Religious Minorities Department. So far the commission on Article 10 of the Political Parties Law has issued charters for six Islamic societies and permits have also been issued for three of them. These executive charters have also been issued by the Ministry of the Interior for Islamic societies and industrial organizations and sent to the Council of Ministers and the President's Office and are awaiting a final opinion.

He discussed the Councils and Elections Law, which has been questioned by several Majlis deputies. He said: I must say that the Ministry of the Interior prepared the Councils Law some time ago and is now doing the final work on it, with the approval of the respected deputies of the government of the Islamic Republic. The Ministry of the Interior is not remiss in any way concerning this, and announced that it was prepared to implement this law some time ago. At the recent seminar for governors general, the positive view of the government of the Islamic Republic concerning enforcement of the Councils Law was conveyed to the governors general.

He added: In conclusion, I consider it necessary to discuss some of the complaints the respected Majlis deputies have made to the Ministry of Interior. Of course, most of the complaints are issues which have already been answered right here in the Majlis. However, so that no misgivings will remain in the minds of the respected deputies, especially the new ones, I will present some explanations.

Inasmuch as I have commented on foreign policy matters, I must say concerning that, that all of the respected deputies know that the Council of Ministers has responsibility for all domestic and foreign affairs. Naturally, as a member of the Council of Ministers, sharing responsibilities with the other ministers, I cannot say that something outside my defined responsibilities is unrelated to me.

He added: I believe that not only the ministers as a group but each one of the ministers has a right to express an opinion. We cannot tell someone to keep quiet and that they have no right to express an opinion, especially on the nation's sensitive and vital issues, on which the basis of the revolution depends. The issue of America is not a simple one for us. Rancor towards America is in the hearts and souls of our people. How can we tell someone not to express his views on America? If our leader were to say that no one is to discuss America, we follow the rule of the jurisconsult [velayat-e faqih], and our hearts and souls and everything we have are at his disposal, and we obey the imam's commands.

If the imam orders silence, then no power has the right to express an opinion. Yet you know that even now, and after we have gone through these things, in his message about Martyr 'Aref Hoseyni, he spoke again about the same principles and goals of the revolution with the same force he used before the revolution. With the same force he used during the war, the imam emphasized that America cannot return to this country.

The minister then discussed the record of crimes committed by the superpowers. He said: The superpowers have sucked the life out of these people, they have ripped this nation apart like vicious wolves and destroyed the people. If they are smiling and winking at us today, we must not be deceived by these smiles and winks. It would be naive of us to say that America has been transformed into a humane nation. It is in the nature of despotism to be vicious, and to usurp the property, lives, and honor of the people of the Third World.

Can we say that America has become humane and that we should establish relations with them and allow its experts to come here and serve this country? What service? If we discuss the international companies and their crimes

under the shah, and talk about the dealings by Martyr Sa'idi and the imam with them, we will not permit ourselves to forget these issues and crimes. To think that our people can forget is a great mistake. How can these people forget, who have given up so many of their youth for the revolution, and how can they ignore America's crimes? What is America doing for this country?

Continuing, he said: During the war, we suffered most at the hands of these very foreign experts, like this English spy Cooper. Has a company ever come to Iran and invested here in our country? This person was someone who had done all of this spying and criminal activity in this country and given all this intelligence to the enemy. Like Cooper, the American scholars and experts are also spies. On this basis, who can stop even one ordinary person in this country from expressing his opinion [as published]? Every one may express his opinions freely, within the limits of the Constitution.

We are all obligated to act within the law, especially with regard to the nation's sensitive and vital issues.

Mr Mohtashemi then discussed the imam's position regarding America. He said: During our entire history, including the present, we have not had such a clear and direct position regarding our relations toward East and West and especially the United States. The imam's remarks make this issue very clear.

He added: Concerning my views on UN Resolution No 598, my view conforms to the principles announced by his holiness the imam, and is exactly what it was before the imam agreed to the resolution's acceptance by the officials. In this regard, I would like to draw the attention of our respected brothers to the imam's message for the lunar year 1407 [1986] hajj season and the opening message of the Third Majlis. At the same time, after the acceptance of the resolution, I consider myself especially obligated, and not just me, but all officials. Is it possible to believe in this revolution and this government and say something against the wishes of the absolute imam?

Continuing his remarks, the minister of the interior discussed the export of gasoline through West Azarbayjan for sale outside the country. He said: The brother deputies know that this has been discussed several times in various commissions of the Majlis, and the necessary answers have been given, because this movement was a legal matter, and the issue has been put before the Article 90 Commission and the necessary answers have been given. I must say that the governor general of West Azarbayjan is one of the very good and active governors general. During the three years that he has served in West Azarbayjan, he has transformed the province, especially as in the past we witnessed extensive riots and lawlessness in West Azarbayjan.

He continued: In 1359 [21 March 1980-20 March 1981] the Revolutionary Council issued an authorization for the provinces of West Azarbayjan and East Azarbayjan to trade oil and oil byproducts in transactions with Turkey at the border, meaning they can sell oil and its byproducts and receive the other side's crops in return.

The minister of interior subsequently discussed the changes which have taken place in the governors general and the lieutenant governors general positions. He said: Is it a violation of the law to deal with and dismiss a governor who neglects his responsibilities regarding the elections, if the members of the Supervisory Council of the Council of Guardians in that city believes that he has neglected them? Yes, in connection with the elections I have dismissed several governors general, lieutenant governors general and political officials of the province for interfering in the elections. I will bring up this point not only here but wherever necessary. I have the courage to say that in order to have sound elections, I dismissed mayors and governors general.

In conclusion, the minister of interior said: Concerning the existence of different viewpoints, I must say to the respected deputies that the Ministry of Interior utilizes individuals with different viewpoints regarding the management of the country. Currently, most of the governors general have kept their positions. In some areas the governors general have been transferred from one area to another. In the Second Majlis, where I received a vote of confidence, I discussed these matters. I said there that as an official of the Ministry of Interior, under no circumstances would I allow myself or any other official to become a governor general or a lieutenant governor general who wants to cause disruption or who may want to put one group in power in favor of another. We have dealt with everyone who has acted in this way. Anyone who criticizes this does so because I am not part of his own group, and my opponents know that I am not part of any party, group, circle, or band.

No one can truly serve the people of this country unless he aligns himself with the Hezbollah nation.

Remarks of the Minister of the Revolution Guards

This report states: In response to Mr Ghaffari's criticism regarding the way foreign transactions are conducted by the Revolution Guards, Mr Mohsen Rafiq-Dust, minister of the Revolution Guards, called them inappropriate and the business of the command area of the Revolution Guards. He stressed that the ministry is the only responsible body for buying, procuring, and producing Revolution Guards' needs in the engineering, legal, and financial areas of this ministry.

He then reviewed the points of criticism. He said: The Ministry of the Revolution Guards has based its policies from the beginning on eliminating the middlemen, so that today, more than 80 percent of domestic and foreign purchases are from local government centers and the governments of nations who are signatories to the treaty [not further specified]. The remaining purchases are also made without middlemen.

The minister of the Revolution Guards added: Those individuals who make these types of purchases are experienced and are specialists in military logistics and have served in the miitary for many years.

The minister of the Revolution Guards then added: All purchase agreements with foreign governments are made in coordination with the Foreign Ministry so that they can be politically advantageous as well.

In response to some of Mr Ghaffari's criticisms, who complained that artillery shells had been bought instead of rockets, Mr Rafiq-Dust said: This purchase was made in 1363 [21 March 1984-20 March 1985], when we had signed an agreement to purchase artillery and medium-range rockets from a country in order to obtain some special knowledge, as well as for the purpose of learning how to build them, so that 20 percent of the munitions purchased were a penalty [as published], in the sense that in this way a certain amount was also assembled as profit for the government.

He also said: The construction budget for the Ministry of the Revolution Guards is limited, so that now the ministry's organizations occupy about 512 buildings. We have the use of about 256 schools, and it is painful for us to occupy these schools where the people's children could be studying. This is due to the limited budget of the Ministry of the Revolution Guards, and I hope this will be resolved with the help of the Majlis.

The minister of the Revolution Guards then indicated: The Ministry of the Revolution Guards has not only made the most inexpensive purchases, but in many cases it has bought many basic goods such as steel, bulldozers, and other items at lower prices..

The logistics area of the Revolution Guards are considered the best, and that they have managed the fronts well for eight years.

Remarks by the Minister of Agriculture

Dr Zali, minister of agriculture, defending the Ministry of Agriculture's achievements, began by describing the nation's agricultural situation prior to the revolution. He said: According to existing statistics and figures, until 1348 [21 March 1969-20 March 1970] Iran had a positive balance of purchases of $20 million, but in 1351 [21 March 1972-20 March 1973] it became a negative balance of $250 million, and this figure doubled in 1356 [21 March 1977-20 March 1978]. On the one hand, before the triumph of the Islamic revolution, the World Food Organization predicted that Iran's food imports would multiply about six times in the years 1356-1369 [21 March 1977-20 March 1991].

He then cited the imam's comments of 2/21/53 [11 May 1974] concerning the state of the nation's agriculture. He said: The figures and statistics that the Ministry of Commerce and the Plan and Budget Ministry have reflect the reality that the nation's agriculture was dying, and according to statistics for the year 1356 [21 March 1977-20 March 1978], about 589,000 tons of rice were imported. Likewise, in 1355 [21 March 1976-20 March 1977] about 532 tomans in citrus fruits were imported, about 261 million tomans of which were imported from South Africa and the despotic regime in Jerusalem.

Mr Zali discussed the nation's agricultural situation in the early years of the revolution. He said: After the revolution, a number of landowners fled, a lot of land was confiscated, and a great deal of land was transferred. One of the blessings of the revolution is that the nation's agriculture did not disintegrate under those conditions. At that time, all efforts of the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture were focused toward preventing the fragmentation of the agricultural sector, as well as to plan for the future.

He then discussed the nation's current agricultural situation. He said: In recent years, despite all the problems, including the shortage of foreign exchange and the fact that much of the agricultural lands were in war areas and were not cultivated, once again we see that despite the increase in the nation's population, the level of imports has been such that the needs of the people have been met, and if we had not had an increase in our population, we could have exported wheat, rice, and fruit.

He then discussed the decline in agricultural imports. He said: Grain imports in 1362 [21 March 1983-20 March 1984] were about 17,161 tons, and about 12,389 tons in 1363 [21 March 1984-20 March 1985]. Last year, however, as in 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987], one of our problems was that chickpeas remained on the hands of the growers, and finally, through great effort, we were able to export 5,000 tons of chickpeas.

The minister of agriculture then discussed the reduced imports of poultry and eggs and the reason for the shortage of these goods. He said: Many of the difficulties have to do with the country's general problems. For example, because foreign exchange was not obtained in time, seed was not imported, and we were consequently obliged to stop poultry production.

The minister of agriculture discussed the increased production of some agricultural crops. He said: In the years 1360 to 1365 [21 March 1981-20 March 1987] the nation's production of grain increased from 9.1 million tons to 11.8 million tons. The production of fruit in these five years also increased from 3.9 million tons to 5.2 million. The production of red meat, white meat and poultry and eggs also increased in this period from 3.8 illion tons to 4.5 million tons. Likewise, the production of potatoes and onions increased from 2.5 million tons to 3.2 million tons.

He added: The nation's total production in the years 1360 to 1365 [21 March 1981-20 March 1987] increased from 32 million to 40 million tons. In view of the

problems of that period, it is seen as a great leap. The minister of agriculture also said: According to reports from the Central Bank, the Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs, and the Plan and Budget Ministry, the agricultural sector was the only one that enjoyed a growth of five to six percent in this period.

Mr Zali discussed the production of wheat before and after the revolution. He said: The average production of wheat in the seven years prior to the revolution was 5.2 million tons, but currently our average production of wheat is between 7.5 to 8 million tons.

In another discussion, the minister of agriculture noted the credit allocated to the agricultural sector. He said: The total development credit allocated to the agricultural sector since the triumph of the Islamic revolution was between seven to eight percent of all the nation's development credit.

Mr Zali discussed the Ministry of Agriculture's activities in the area of research. He said: The Ministry of Agriculture has the nation's best-equipped research facilities, and half of the nation's entire research funds is allocated to us. About 1,000 experts and technicians work in the Ministry of Agriculture's research departments.

He then gave details on the results of research in the Ministry of Agriculture.

Subsequently, he defended the method of managing the Ministry of Agriculture. He said: What I said before becoming a minister has remained true and has not changed. We reorganized the ministry, which increased our presence in the rural areas.

In conclusion, Mr Zali said: In view of the plans and work that are being carried out, if necessary attention is paid to agriculture, our country's agriculture will definitely be able to solve many of the nation's problems, if it has the potential resources and devoted personnel and if it receives the special attention of the Majlis and the government.

Remarks by the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs

Mr Sarhadizadeh, minister of labor and social affairs, gave a short talk in which he defended the work of the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War and answered the comments of deputies who criticized the government's achievements.

He began by saying: Concerning the Kordafzar Company, about which one of the deputies spoke, I must say that the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War did not sell this company. Its ownership is 100 percent with the foundation, and the claim that it has been sold is simply a lie.

He added: The story of the sale of the Kashiabad factory is also not correct, and 87 percent of the shares of the factory belong to the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War. The foundation now has control of these shares. Of course, that place cannot be called a factory, because it has no reception area or other facilities. However, the land for it, which was to have been used for a factory, and is still designated as such, is in the possession of the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War.

The minister of labor and social affairs then discussed the comments of one of the deputies concerning the sale of cloth belonging to the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War. He explained: These consisted of both Kurdish outfits and cloth which came from the years before 1363 [21 March 1984-20 March 1985]. The clothing was distributed, and he cloth, which had been left in storage, was in danger of being ruined. I proposed that the aid komiteh purchase it. They said since this fabric had been destroyed [as published], they would buy them at 30 percent below the usual price. As the price proposed by the aid komiteh was not acceptable, we auctioned it off and sold it to 10 to 15 companies.

Concerning the soap that was sold by the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War, the minister of labor and social affairs explained that this was very luxurious soap that had been imported in 1360 [21 March 1981-20 March 1982] and given as a gift to the foundation. The foundation has the right to convert its substances and goods for better uses, and to meet its more important expenses by selling its goods.

He continued: Here they have also discussed the tailor's cooperative. This cooperative was formed by the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War, but was misused and it was not registered. This cooperative was getting cloth from the Ministry of Commerce and selling it on the free market. This cooperative misused a total of about three million tomans, and its file has been turned over to the public prosecutor and it is being legally prosecuted.

The minister of labor and social affairs was asked a question by one of the deputies concerning weak management in the foundation. He answered: When we deal with the networks of bands involved in corrupt and unwholesome relations, even though we are illiterate and without management, we infiltrate these networks with certain plans in mind and dissolve them. When they are dissolved, they wail and moan that this is not management, literacy, and knowledge. That is what we are, and from here on this method will continue. The group which feeds the followers of the prophet of plunder has been closed down. This immature and illiterate management will stop abuses.

In conclusion, he said: Through the grace of God, we have up to the minute accounts for all the expenditures of the Foundation for the Affairs of Refugees of the Imposed War.

At the conclusion of his talk, Mr Sarhadizadeh, minister of labor and social affairs, read the latest letter from the deputy from Zarand of Kerman to Imam Khomeyni concerning the comments of one of the Majlis deputies about the minister of interior, and the imam's response. The text of this letter and the imam's letter are as follows:

To the great blessed leader of the revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Holiness Ayatollah al-'Ozma Imam Khomeyni (may God extend his shadow),

With greetings and best wishes, one of the respected deputies of the Majlis, may Almighty God help them, has spoken in opposition to Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mr Mohtashemi, the respected minister of the interior, saying among other things that Your Holiness, in a letter to the Council of Ministers, had Mr Mohtashemi in mind when you said that each minister must act within the limits of his authority. Your humble servant and the other Majlis deputies ask that if this was your intention, let us know what we should do. We await your orders.

Deputy from Zarand of Kerman, Majid Ansari Kermani
6/20/67 [11 September 1988]

Concerning this, the imam of the nation answered as follows:

In the name of the Almighty.
Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohtashemi, may God help him, is an old friend of mine and a religious, committed, and combative person, who has always been a good servant for Islam and Iran with his political awareness. I was not referring to Mr Mohtashemi in my letter to the Council of Ministers. God willing, when the gentlemen attribute certain things to someone, they should take necessary care and observe religious law regarding the matter.

20 Shahrivar 1367 [11 September 1988]
Ruhollah al-Musavi al-Khomeyni

Comments by the Minister of Heavy Industries

According to this report, Mr Behzad Nabavi, minister of heavy industries, as the senior member of the cabinet, also spoke in defense of his accomplishments. He said: If someone wants to judge me after a half-hour evaluation, his judgment will not be valid. I therefore request a complete judgement from this Majlis, and not on the basis of one issue.

He added: Accomplishments must not be considered in isolation. Assuming someone committed a violation in the Ministry of Heavy Industries, has anyone ever committed a violation in this country, and was this the biggest one to date?

Mr Nabavi then called some of the criticisms of the deputies, such as financial abuses in arms transactions, not valid. He continued: It may not be possible here to explain the accomplishments of the Ministry of Heavy Industries in connection with the war. The Ministry of Heavy Industries may have entered the war late, but it is now without blame in this area.

He added: If someone wants to study the accomplishments of a group, the best way is to visit the International Exposition, as the accomplishments of the Ministry of Heavy Industries are worth studying in this exposition.

The speaker then said: How very good of the Majlis not to vote for a deputy who in general has the reputation of following the specific line and direction of the other deputies in the Majlis, if they do not agree with him. This shows that the Majlis is a very sound body.

The minister of heavy industries then discussed the issue of financial abuses in the Saipa Company, which was criticized. He said: In this seven-year period, I have had a number of regular opponents, but I have also had a number of regular supporters. Why did the ones who traditionally supported and who gave me a vote of confidence seven times, not value their votes enough to invite me here even once to answer questions?

He added: If this matter is more important than the accusation of murdering Raja'i, the accusation of treason in the Algeria accord, or of embezzling $166 million, then is it not important enough to question me about it at a special or public session of the Majlis?

The speaker then said: Today, there is no skill involved in reciting sharp slogans. The ideas and beliefs of one's comrades-in-arms must be studied over a period of years. My intellectual line and my positions and the record of the sessions of the Economic Council are clear, but now everyone is reciting sharp revolutionary slogans. In those days, we were not seeking special privileges.

Mr Nabavi then announced: In a word, my position is the line of Islam, the line of the revolution, and the imam's line, and if I have not been able to demonstrate that over these years, then I cannot demonstrate it now.

Continuing his remarks, the minister of heavy industries rejected the notion that the ministry's management is weak and said: Of course I acknowledge the many weaknesses that are in my management, but I was not known for weak management. Perhaps the most important issue that brought on this judgment was the Saipa affair.

He continued: This is neither the first nor the last instance. Until a system is established in the country for training committed and competent personnel, unreliable and unorthodox people could be found in all the groups, just as similar things existed in the past.

The minister of heavy industries then discussed the management of the Saipa Company. He said: The director was the head of one of the companies under the mantle of the Expansion and Reconstruction Organization, and this organization has 140 units and 700 managers, and one could swear by most of them. However, we do not have the means or the resources to guarantee all of them.

He added: One must see what the standard for the selection of a manager is. Are we selecting a manager to serve on the Assembly of Experts?

Our criterion for selecting a manager was commitment. We heard from our dear friends who studied in America prior to the revolution, that before the revolution, he was associated with Islamic societies. We heard that before the revolution he had contacts with Islamic societies of America and Canada and he was involved with the occupation of the Iranian Embassy. He did not play a special role in the Army. He was appointed to this position several years ago, and prior to this he managed other companies, including one company that was affiliated with a foundation. He also had a position with an organization involved with the war. Recently, he played an important role in sensitive political-cultural work.

The speaker reiterated: My criterion for selecting him was his commitment, and we ourselves discovered his violations.

Concluding his talk, he asked that if better people could be found to take over, the Majlis should accept them as a matter of obligation under religious law. Otherwise, it should not do anything to weaken the government in such a way that its capacity to serve would be diminished.

Comments by the Minister of Health, Health Care, and Medical Education

Mr Marandi, minister of health, health care, and medical education, gave a talk. He began by saying: One of the sources of pride of the Ministry of Health is its meeting deadlines. If our brothers and sisters refer to four years ago to when I was nominated to the Majlis and compare what I said with what the ministry has done, they will see that everything that was discussed has been implemented.

He discussed the war-time services of the Ministry of Health. He said: Throughout the imposed war, there were no epidemics. All fighters were vaccinated before going to the front lines, and meningitis, which is rampant among the military throughout the world, did not appear in our country. We prevented it with vaccinations.

Mr Marandi added: So far 14,000 medical personnel, including doctors, nurses and nurse's aides, have been sent to the fronts; this is in addition to the students and others who went to the fronts as volunteers. Our medical group served from the front lines to the rear echelon, and in some cases we had up to 24 surgical procedures underway, and we must continue these services in the post-war years as well.

The medical group has given many martyrs, prisoners, and handicapped persons to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Concerning the procurement of the needs at the fronts by the Ministry of Health, he said: It was our responsibility to procure medical equipment, along with medicine and blood, for the fronts, and when these items were in short supply in the country, we tried to keep the fronts from suffering because of the situation.

The minister of health discussed the measures taken to treat those injured by chemical warfare. He said: This was a new experience for us, and we therefore built a research center to study and treat the injured. There, physicians and nurses were trained to use the most suitable method of treatment.

Mr Marandi then discussed the role of the Ministry of Health in the matter of education. He said: We have always been faced with shortages of personnel in the medical group and have used foreign physicians. With the formation of the Ministry of Health, Health Care, and Education, this problem is being solved, so that every year we get an average of 5,000 students. Here I can report the good news that within six years the number of physicians in the country will double and we will not need foreign physicians. In this way we will save $4 to $5 million annually in foreign exchange.

He added: Formerly, we had 18 medical schools, and this year the number of medical schools is 28. Likewise, in two years two dental schools and two pharmaceutical schools have been established, and we now have medical schools in 20 provinces of the country.

Mr Marandi then discussed the increase in research activities and the high academic quality of the medical schools, as well as other academic issues. He said: We have done a lot of work on medical treatment, the Salk vaccine, and leprosy.

He discussed activities regarding medical treatment. He said: The shortage of manpower, hospital beds, and equipment has an effect on treatment, and in order to improve the treatment situation, we follow an equitable expansion policy for hospital beds and we hope to supply one-fifth of the beds for 1,000 patients in the deprived areas.

He added: In the last two to three years, 5,223 beds and 79 hospitals have been provided.

Mr Marandi then discussed the importance of health care. He said: The reason for emphasizing health care as part of medical treatment is to prevent illness and reduce the number of our patients. Now, with the struggle that we have begun against various illnesses, the number of

our patients has been minimized. He then discussed the shortage and deterioration of medical equipment and noted that this problem exists everywhere in the world, and that it is not unique to Iran.

Elsewhere in his talk, Mr Marandi said: The cost of medical treatment early in the revolution was about 2.7 billion tomans, and this figure reached 10.5 billion tomans last year. This is at a time when our production in this area has roughly tripled.

In conclusion, he listed future antibiotic production within the country and progress in the quality of medicine as positive achievements of the Ministry of Health, Health Care, and Medical Treatment.

Comments by the Minister of Petroleum

According to the same report, Mr Aqazadeh, the minister of petroleum, began by discussing our nation's resources. He said: Of the 700 billion barrels of oil in the world, 400 billion barrels belong to four nations in the Persian Gulf, and of this amount, among the oil-producing nations, we are the number three country in terms of oil reserves and the second in terms of natural gas reserves. If we want to take steps to rebuild the country's economy after this, we will have to use the nations's oil and gas resources for the next 10 to 15 years to achieve full economic independence.

He then emphasized the importance of paying attention to the oil industry. He said: Even if we concern ourselves with nonpetroleum income, we must still give priority to the oil industry, because the achievements in the oil industry have an effect on income of this type.

Noting that our country, with a 70-year background in oil, has remained behind in production of petrochemicals, the minister of oil then said: We import 1.8 million tons of fertilizer annually, half of which is the azaneh type, and natural gas is one of the primary raw materials of this type of fertilizer.

Mr Aqazadeh then asked: If we want to invest in this nation in order to be able to earn added value for our products, what industrial sector can provide added value as can the petroleum industry?

Continuing this discussion, the minister of oil noted that the value of one barrel of oil, if converted to petrochemical materials, has 10 to 15 times more value. He said: Since I took over the ministry of petroleum, all of my efforts have been towards gas and petrochemical projects.

Mr Aqazadeh then noted that the petrochemical projects will be completed by 1371 [21 March 1992-20 March 1993]. He announced: The foreign exchange income earned by the petrochemical industry will be about $1 billion per year by 1371.

The minister of oil also said that in order to replace oil, efforts must be made to convert oil to petrochemical products and gas to chemical fertilizers and other products.

Elsewhere in his talk, the minister of petroleum responded with surprise to a comment from a Majlis deputy that the Ministry of Petroleum pursues increased production and has no sensitivity to increasing prices. He said: At least 100 articles have been published in the world and all of them say that Iran believes that the level of production must be reduced in order to increase prices, and even now everyone knows that there are two factions in OPEC. On one side is Iran, the leader of the progressive faction, which defends price increases, and opoosing Iran is the reactionary faction led by Saudi Arabia, which believes in increasing production.

Continuing, Mr Aqazadeh asked: Did we struggle in OPEC for three years to increase production? He stressed: The importance of the war that is now going on in the oil market is no less than that of the imposed war.

The minister of petroleum then said, concerning the injection of gas (?steam) in oil reserves, that projects to inject gas are very expensive to complete, each one costing about several billion dollars, but in view of the high added value that these projects will produce, it is necessary for investments to be made in this area, because gas injection will allow the reclamation of 17 billion barrels of oil.

He explained that three of the nation's great oil reserves need gas (?steam) injection, and that this need was increased by the three years of the Ba'thist regime's bombings and attacks on the oil regions. Plans to complete projects in these areas have been pursued, and phase one for two of these reserves will soon begin.

The minister of petroleum then discussed the construction of an oil pipeline. He said: One of the reasons that I went to the Ministry of Petroleum was to pursue the Moharram Oil Pipeline Project. When I entered the Ministry of Petroleum, there was an international bidding competition going on for the Moharram Project, which Turkey won. One of the measures we took was to stop this bidding and make it a domestic contest, and today three contractors, one foreign and two domestic, are working on this pipeline. There were two pipelines there, half of which cost $700 million, and we changed this figure to about $130 million. Now why is it being said that we have favored foreign contractors? We have sought Iranian contractors and saved $400 to $500 million dollars.

Continuing this discussion, he mentioned the construction of a pipeline through Turkey. He said: In 1362 [21 March 1983-20 March 1984] a letter of understanding was signed for the building of a pipeline through Turkey,

and when the responsibility of the Ministry of Petroleum was given to me, this subject was being discussed. So long as this pipeline is not economical, it is not workable, and I still hold this view.

Mr Aqazadeh then said: There has not been a single part of the oil industry which has not been bombed at least once. He said: How could wartime conditions have failed to affect the nation's energy or export systems? Can this be due to anything other than the efforts and persistence of the people who work in this system?

He continued: I declare that we do not need even one foreigner to rebuild the refineries, the pipelines, and the petrochemical complexes from scratch. The capability has now developed to the point where we can start the first phase of rebuilding the Abadan Petrochemical Complex within six months, and all of this work will be done by these very brothers who work in the oil industry. Even the oil platforms in the Gulf, two of which, as you know, were hit by the Americans, were put into operation on the continental shelf by our brothers.

In conclusion, Mr Aqazadeh said: We must value the nation's domestic manpower, and the personnel who today have become seasoned and capable. We must call upon them to make their own extensive efforts for this industry.

Comments by the Minister of Housing and Urban Development

Our correspondent reports that Engineer Saraj Eddin Kazeruni, minister of housing and urban development, referred to criticism by Mr Mo'azenzadeh and said that the issue of transferring land in return for a new Renault was simply an unmanly accusation.

He then discussed the framework of the new Urban Lands Law. He said: The new Urban Lands Law and its guidelines are not one dimensional. Many of the government's policies in housing, urban construction and the policies of the Council on the Economy, the government, and the Ministry of Housing are reflected in that law. For example, in this law and its guidelines, the question of shelter is not taken in isolation. Also considered are the question of building schools in the area, the creation of green areas, a hospital, and the construction of streets in connection with the building of houses. These are the planned and anticipated projects.

Concerning future projects for the Ministry of Housing, Mr Kazeruni announced: We have construction plans for projects in about 230 cities, which are being implemented with participation by the people. All of these services are being carried out on site, and of the total, at least 80 percent have been completed or are being carried out.

Continuing his defense, the minister of housing and urban construction discussed the building of new cities, and said: According to statistical predictions, in the next 23 years our urban population will double at the current rate of population growth (of course without regard to the effects of emigrants). If planning is not done to anticipate this, the cities will expand haphazardly, and this is the Ministry of Housing's motivation for creating new cities.

He added: Because of the expansion of investment in urban services, it is the policy of the government to plan very large cities. For this reason, we will create a new city 40 kilometers from the city of Arak, which is faced with a population increase due to its industrialization. The new city will be called Mohajeran and will be able to house 400,000 families and will accommodate the additional growth in population caused by new employment in this province.

Likewise, because of the Sar Cheshmeh Copper Industry in Kerman, new cities will be established to draw the surplus population. The Ministry of Housing is building a total of 12 new cities, with the participation of the people, with an approximate capacity of 500,000 individuals.

The speaker then continued: The Ministry of Housing is the largest organization that works with the practical participation of the people and about 1,000 billion rials.

Mr Kazeruni then said: The people will invest to build housing in these cities, and the government will only lay the groundwork. He noted: In all of the construction preparation projects the Ministry of Housing's point of view with respect to urban construction is observed, and I say again that we have 30 million square meters of construction capability. We believe that in all construction projects, the oil budget should not be used to create housing, and that this must be done with help from the people.

The minister of housing and urban development then discussed new home construction plans in the villages. He said: In the current year, villages of more than 400 families, on the basis of a note in this year's budget, are being designed by the Ministry of Housing, and at least five homes are being built for the teachers in this group of villages through the sale of organization houses in major cities. In general, the policy of the Ministry of Housing is based on the principle that if a more comfortable class's money is used to subsidize a more deprived class, a practical way will be found to deal with the deprived class of society, and as land prices vary, there is also the possibility for subsidies.

He stressed again: In all of these projects, efforts have been made, without using the government's budget, to provide resources to the deprived class by taking from the comfortable class.

Comments by the Minister of Education and Training

Mr Akrami, minister of education and training, was another speaker in the Majlis session. He began by saying: In the previous term I made two promises, one to change the system of education and training, and the other to give supplemental aid to teachers and educators. With regard to making fundamental changes, praise God, I must say that this project has been carried out and has also been submitted for review. After that we presented this project to the Supreme Revolutionary Educational Council, and I hope it will be approved. Concerning the provision of supplemental aid to teachers and educators, all the dear ones must take note of the country's situation in these three or four years, but in view of all the problems, a great deal of work has been done.

For example, for the purpose of creating and equipping manpower needed by the schools and villages, with the prime minister's approval, interest-free loans are to be given to every educator living in a village and employed there. Likewise, under the agreement reached in 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987], 20 to 25 percent of the homes built by the Foundation for the Oppressed throughout the country will be given to educators. Close to two billion tomans have been obtained from the banks as loans granted to teachers. Likewise, with the prime minister's approval, in 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988] five billion rials were given to them in the form of aid to the housing cooperatives for educators.

He added: Of the salaried teachers whose status was not clear at the beginning of the revolution, 15,000 have been employed and, God willing, we hope that the rest of them will also be hired.

Continuing his remarks, he listed the services of the Ministry of Education and Training as follows: Implementation of the project to classify employment; amending of retirement regulations for retirees; establishment of educational societies, education staffs, and education consultation units; publication of a monthly education journal; organization of art and education contests; plans for training in various educational areas and a journeyman training program; formation of student athletic societies; creation of special educational programs for the Shahed schools; expansion of physical training contests; increasing the number of credits required, as well as other matters..

The speaker then noted: Boarding schools have been formed in the deprived rural areas, along with remedial and review classes.The schools with few students have been converted to boarding schools.

Likewise the defense education project, the teacher-soldier project, the establishment of model schools, the establishment of 140 Shahed central schools in the years 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987] and 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988] and increasing that number to 200, the establishment of schools for combatants and the implementation of the neighborhood work project in the technical and professional fields are among the most important measures approved by the Ministry of Education and Training.

Continuing his remarks, the minister of education and training discussed the financial problems of students and the existence of various conflicts in the management of the Ministry of Education and Training. He announced: If it is determined that there are stronger people than myself, then I must definitely put my trust in their hands. However, if conditions are not favorable, in the next few months I will present bills to the Majlis. If they are enacted and if the problems are solved for the teachers, I am at your service. Otherwise, I apologize.

Comments by the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance

As the session continued, Mr Khatami, minister of culture and Islamic guidance, called the criticism of opponents unfounded and discussed the importance of culture and art in the government of the Islamic Republic. He said: The budget for culture is part of the current budget which must be reviewed. Despite this, however, in 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988] the Majlis increased the budget for this ministry, which shows the importance of its work.

Likewise, in assessing the activities of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, he concluded that the cultural activities under the auspices of that ministry have been increasing.

Mr Khatami then discussed the organization of an exposition by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in Japan. He said: The sum of 230 million rials was allocated for this exposition with the approval of the Council of Ministers, which lasted six months and was visited by about one million people. Apart from this, $250,000 in handicrafts were sold and in addition we obtained a market in that country.

In conclusion, he expressed the hope that that ministry would be able to establish a creative movement, which is the basic task of guidance, as well as bring about the flourishing of culture in society.

Comments by the Minister of Culture and Higher Education

ETTELA'AT's parliamentary correspondent reports that Mr Farhadi, minister of culture and higher education, defended the achievements of the Council of Ministers.

He began by discussing this ministry's work in the area of educational affairs, noting the plans that have been made with regard to this. He said: With the approval of the law to utilize the free time of university professors,

we have increased the admission capacity for students from 45,000 persons per year to 70,000, and this figure is equal to the positions for students under the former regime.

He added that this figure does not include the students who are placed by the nongovernment and nonmilitary institutions, or the schools in the other ministries.

Mr Farhadi then said: We have presented a plan to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council to expand higher education and improve its quality and quantity within the principles of the Constitution and the growth rate of the population.

Then he noted that currently there are 500 students in the country for every 100,000 persons and said: We are trying to have 2,000 students for every 100,000 persons.

Mr Farhadi then discussed the educational activities in the areas of health care and medical treatment, education in the other ministries, education in nongovernment and nonprofit institutions, and correspondence schools. He said: We must try to establish higher education units in all the nation's provinces, and for this purpose in the last two years we have issued authorizations for the establishment of centers of higher learning in the provinces.

Mr Farhadi then noted that authorization to establish 84 universities has been issued, and he enumerated the number of new colleges established since the revolution for the first time.

He then discussed the doctoral program. He said: Based on what has been enacted by the Cultural Revolution Staff, we can have doctoral programs in 121 fields in the country, but we need resources and interest, and we have therefore authorized 76 of them so far, and have accepted students in 30 fields.

The minister of culture and higher education continued: We can increase the number of students at the expert level of the guidance program, and each one of these students could solve one of the country's problems in an effective way and become executives for fundamental research task.

He added: Concerning research, we have activated the National Council on Higher Studies, which will work as an authority in coordination, guidance, support, and setting of priorities for research. This council is formed under the presidency of the prime minister and has enacted some good measures so far, including one establishing the National Academic Information Bank.

Mr Farhadi also said: In the current year three units of the National Academic Information Bank will be finished, and in the next two or three years, God willing, we will have all of the nation's academic information available.

Explaining that we are connected to 64 of the world's information centers, he said that in view of these links, we can make valuable information available to the nation's researchers.

The minister of culture and higher education then discussed this ministry's activities in matters pertaining to the war. He said: We designed the University at the Fronts project, and we had a representative on the University War Support Staff on behalf of the war command.

In conclusion, he listed some of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education's other positive achievements, such as the establishment of research priorities, the publication of scientific journals in medicine, engineering, and basic sciences, research in the technology of gold mining, and the preparation of reports on research done in the universities.

Comments by the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance

Continuing the discussions by cabinet ministers on the government's achievements, Mr Iravani, minister of economic affairs and finance, explained the ministry's future plans. He began by announcing the government's financial policies: In order to reduce gradually the government's budget deficit, plans have been made to increase tax revenue as the soundest source of government income, so that by taking more taxes from enormous incomes, the goal of a just income distribution will be reached.

The speaker then noted: To this end, some of the most important measures which were passed were the approval of the bills to decrease taxes on wages, to collect fixed taxes, and, most important, the approval of a bill on direct taxes with revisions.

He then presented statistics on employment taxes and direct taxes. He said: The amount of employment and direct taxes collected has increased from previous years, and with the decrease in foreign exchange income, that can be viewed as a positive step.

Mr Iravani then said that it is important to determine tax income capacity and to bring the tax statistics system in line with the gross domestic product system (calculating the share of taxes in the important sectors of the nation's economy since 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987]) in carrying out the nation's planning. In another comment, he said that one of the ministry's most important and most basic accomplishments was writing the Value Added Tax Bill.

The minister of economic affairs and finance also listed the decrease in expenses and the removal and merging of organizations with duplicate functions, as future plans of

the ministry. Concerning the government's monetary policies, he announced: The first goal of the nation's financial system is to attract deposits with liquidity and growth and interest-free loans in order to procure resources and control inflation. To this end, the comprehensive project for National Information Banking System will bring a great change in the method for monetary exchanges.

Listing the most important programs in the nation's banking system, he cited the procurement of credit for the production sector, limitations on credit to the service and commercial sectors, and support for cooperatives. He said: In order to diversify the ways of drawing the surplus income of individuals, the matter of currency in circulation is the issue of the day, and in this regard, a bill has been presented which could prevent the accumulation of excess wealth and improve the production system.

Continuing his talk, the minister of economic affairs and finance mentioned the procurement of a bill for a National Economic System as one of the government's most important future plans, and he stressed: We must increase the nation's foreign exchange income by expanding nonpetroleum imports. The National Economic System Bill will be written to specify limits on the activities of the government, cooperative and private sectors, to specify the position of the private foundations and organizations which have become large economic foundations without their position being specified, to organize the nation's economic affairs, and to bring about policy and policy conformity for all units, foundations, and economic sectors.

Mr Iravani also announced: Among the best measures taken by this ministry are writing the Insurance Company Administration Bill, now being studied in Majlis commissions, the Insurance and Insuring Bill, the Administration of Government Company Affairs Bill, and the important bill forming the Iran Foreign Investment Company, which will be implemented pursuing the goals of the Islamic revolution. The plans for the future in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance include the writing and approval of guidelines for the transfer of shares in government production units to workers and employees, attention to the matter of education and establishing a college of economic affairs and finance to strengthen managers, and the revitalization and expansion of the role of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance in economic cooperation with foreign countries and its role in international economic organizations.

In conclusion, he discussed the importance of the management system. He said: The Management Bill is supervision, and the result of supervision is encouragement and warned against corruption or deviation, particularly in financial organizations. Action against corruption must be decisive.

Comments by the Minister of Industries

As the session continued, Engineer Shafe'i, minister of industries, rejected Mr Ghaffari's criticism and said: Among the positive points of the Ministry of Industries is the stability of its management, where the average length of a manager's term in this ministry is about 37 months.

Mr Shafe'i then discussed the method of issuing agreements in principle by the Ministry of Industries. He said: The issuance of agreements by this ministry has played a prominent role in the creation of direct and indirect employment and in attracting unused capital.

He added: Most of the agreements in principle brought foreign exchange with them, and a limited number of them were procured with government foreign exchange. In view of the fact that these industries were part of the framework of the government's production planning and that the applicants themselves also provided foreign exchange, we supported them because they did not place any foreign exchange burden on the country.

ETTELA'AT's parliamentary correspondent reports: Following the comments of the cabinet ministers, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Majlis, thanked the deputies and ministers who spoke with strength and precision, and he called such discussions enlightening.

In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the prime minister's cabinet would be completed following these discussions.

Pakistan

7 Killed, 12 Injured in Charsadda Bombing

BK1910031988 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] In Pakistan, 7 persons were killed and 12 injured in a bomb explosion in Charsadda town, 25 km from Peshawar, last night. The bomb was planted near a hotel.

Four persons died on the spot, while three succumbed to their injuries. The condition of five of the injured is stated to be critical.

Iran's Besharati Arrives With Khamene'i Message

LD1810180188 Tehran IRNA in English 1745 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Islamabad, Oct. 18, IRNA—Acting Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati arrived here Tuesday, carrying a message from President 'Ali Khamene'i for his Pakistani counterpart Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

In an interview with IRNA upon arrival here, Besharati said the two countries' cordial and good neighbourly ties necessitate frequent exchange of various delegations.

He said during his stay in Pakistan he would hold talks with that country's president, foreign minister and acting foreign minister on issues of mutual interest including the latest developments regarding Security Council Resolution 598 and the results of the two rounds of Iran-Iraq peace talks in Geneva and New York.

Besharati stressed that the Islamic Republic attaches great importance to Pakistan's security. Iran considers Pakistan's security as its own and calls for unity and integrity in that country, he added.

Sri Lanka

Opposition Accuses Regime of 'Brutal Atrocities'

BK1710132188 Hong Kong AFP in English 1257 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Text] Colombo, Oct 17 (AFP)—A major Sri Lankan opposition alliance Monday blamed the government for continuing unrest in the island nation and called for an end to what it called state-sponsored terrorism.

An eight-party grouping, including the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the militant Sinhalese Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front), said it condemned "brutal atrocities and violation of human rights by the state."

The statement was an apparent reference to violent anti-government demonstrations last week which were put down by security forces with the loss of at least 14 people, political observers here said.

"We condemn the massacre of civilians unleashed by the state in the past few days, particularly in the south. We call for an immediate cessation of state-sponsored terrorism," the alliance said in a statement.

It added that the members of the grouping were prepared to "intervene" to restore normalcy in the troubled Indian Ocean republic.

In a separate statement, seven members in the group, excluding the JVP, called for a meeting with President Junius Jayewardene in an effort to restore peace in the country.

The seven-party group asked for the immediate dissolution of Parliament, disbandment of paramilitary forces and suspension of military operations, including those of Indian troops deployed on the island.

"We are deeply concerned about this situation of violence, agitation and instability and feel that the situation cannot be allowed to continue. We feel that peace and normalcy can be created if the government fulfills our demands," the statement said.

The statements coincided with the launching of an election campaign Monday by the ruling United National Party (UNP) presidential candidate, Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Presidential polls are due between December 4 and January 3, but parliamentary elections are not due until July. Mr. Jayewardene has said he wants to hold early general elections but has not announced dates.

The seven-party statement also said they wanted autonomy elections in the island's east put off and powers of provincial councils elsewhere suspended until major elections were concluded.

Opposition parties are opposed to the creation of provincial councils in line with a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord which sought to end a bloody Tamil separatist campaign.

The councils, which have greater autonomy than the previous urban councils, have been set up in seven of the island's nine provinces since April.

Council polls in the north and east were delayed by continuing violence there but have been scheduled for November 19.

Anti-Government Protests Spread, Curfew Decreed

BK1910110788 Hong Kong AFP in English 0946 GMT 19 Oct 88

[Text] Colombo, Oct 19 (AFP)—Anti-government protesters backed by Sinhalese militants took to the streets in Sri Lanka Wednesday and clashed with police in the north-central region, officials and residents said.

Police called a 24-hour curfew in north-central Anuradhapura town after security forces used teargas to dispel thousands of protesters, officials said, adding that there were no immediate reports of casualties.

The militant Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP or People's Liberation Front) had told government and private employees in Southern Province and in Anuradhapura to strike and join a protest march or face death, residents said.

About 100 workers marched noisily down a street here, just 100 meters (110 yards) from President Junius Jayewardene's official residence, urging other workers to join them, eyewitnesses said.

The JVP has said the strike was to press their demands and force the government to dissolve Parliament and set up a caretaker administration until after a presidential election due in December.

The JVP-backed demonstrators damaged four state-owned buses in southern Ratmalana town as the strike spread to the area from neighbouring Kalutara and Panadura towns.

Similar incidents were reported from Galle, Matara and Gintota Districts, and residents said bus and train services were disrupted.

The JVP staged a successful nationwide strike October 10, despite the government's invoking sweeping emergency powers, and clashed with police and security forces leaving at least 14 people dead.

An eight-party opposition alliance, including the JVP, has blamed the government for continuing unrest in the island nation and demanded an end to what it called state-sponsored terrorism.

In other developments, suspected JVP activists gunned down the chauffeur of the ruling party chairman Tuesday in the south and raided a police technical centre in Central Province and grabbed five guns, police said.

They said the man was returning after work when two gunmen killed him at Kiriwaththuduwa village.

About 20 armed men attacked the Pallakele police and removed five guns, ammunition and several police uniforms, a police spokesman said.

The JVP is violently opposed to a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord which sought to end a bloody Tamil separatist campaign and under which New Delhi has some 49,000 troops in the island's north and east.

Since the accord, the JVP has been accused of killing more than 400 ruling party supporters, security personnel and left-wingers backing the accord.

5 Indian Soldiers Killed, 1 Hurt in Mine Blast

BK1610160688 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Oct 88

[Text] Five PKF [Peacekeeping Force] soldiers were killed in the Batticaloa sector in eastern Sri Lanka today when their vehicle was blown up by a landmine planted by LTTE militants.

Defense Ministry sources in New Delhi said another soldier was injured in the mine blast. PKF patrol killed one LTTE militant and apprehended three others during search operations in the Jaffna sector. They also recovered one carbine, one grenade, and some arms and ammunition.

Four LTTE militants were captured from the Tricomalee sector. The sources also said that in another incident a civilian was shot dead by the militants in Jaffna town.

8 LTTE Cadres Released in Jaffna 17 Oct

BK1710131188 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Oct 88

[Text] Eight LTTE men, flown from Tamil Nadu last week, were released in Jaffna today. They were among the 72 LTTE cadres taken to Trincomalee from Madurai. Last week, nine persons, including the LTTE leader Kittu, were released.

Meanwhile, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front [EPRLF] has commended the Sri Lankan Government for its decision to grant citizenship to all stateless people of Indian origin.

The general secretary of the EPRLF, Mr K. Padmanabha, told AIR correspondent in Trincomalee that the step is in the right direction and will promote the welfare of Tamils working in tea estates and other places in the island. He said the democratic process set in motion now should be utilized by all Tamil groups to achieve peace.

Suspected Tamil Rebels Kill 6 Civilians

BK1810065688 Hong Kong AFP in English 0640 GMT 18 Oct 88

[Text] Colombo, Oct 18 (AFP)—Suspected Tamil guerrillas killed six civilians in eastern Sri Lanka as violence escalated in the region, police in the area said Tuesday.

Suspected fighters of the most powerful Tamil separatist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) killed five Tamils and a Sinhalese in Mangalaoya village late Monday, a police officer contacted by telephone said.

He said the village was in Sinhalese-dominated Ampara region but bordering Tamil-dominated Batticaloa District where LTTE activists have been active in the past few weeks, killing rival Tamils and blowing up five Indian soldiers.

"We are not certain about the motive. They killed the Tamils either due to a mistaken identity because they were in a Sinhalese village or they may be rivals," the police officer in neighbouring Bakiella village said.

The latest attack came a day after suspected LTTE men gunned down four construction workers in northeastern Trincomalee area Sunday. The LTTE was also blamed for massacring 45 Sinhalese farmers in north-central Ullukulama village last week.

The LTTE is opposed to some 60,000 Sinhalese living in the eastern region and attacked them continually in a bid to drive them out.

Under a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord the multi-ethnic east is to be united with the Tamil-dominated north to create a single provincial council. But a referendum is due within a year for people in the east to decide if they want the merger with the north to continue.

Observers here say this has attracted attacks against Sinhalese and Moslems in the area, as they together can tip the scales at a merger vote.

The LTTE has rejected the peace pact, prompting a major Indian offensive last October to disarm the group. Since then, over 600 Indian soldiers and more than 2,000 suspected LTTE activists have died in bitter combat.

Council Member Killed by Suspected JVP Men
BK1410092888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 14 Oct 88

[Text] In Sri Lanka, a member of the provincial council, Mr (A.H. Paripradhani), belonging to the ruling United National Party, was killed last night when his house was attacked in Badulla in Uva Province by suspected JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna]. Three guns were reportedly stolen from the security staff. Three other supporters of the ruling party were killed in separate incidents in the Southern Province.

Sinhalese militants today bombed a railway station in central Sri Lanka. Curfew has been extended in the area and the Southern Province. Officials said the JVP extremists exploded bombs at Kadugannawa railway station in a dawn attack, but there were no casualties.

The attack came as the government extended the curfew in neighboring Kandy and Harispattuwa towns and southern Matara District till Saturday [15 October].

Two more universities, that of Colombo and Peradeniya, were closed indefinitely following student unrest. Three other universities in the country have also been closed down.